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American Fighters
IN THE FOREIGN LEGION
1914-1918



MONUMENT TO THE AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS WHO FELL FOR FRANCE
Place des États-Unis, Paris

American Fighters
IN THE FOREIGN LEGION
1914-1918

PAUL AYRES ROCKWELL



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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1930

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To
EDGAR JOHN BOULIGNY
and
CHRISTOPHER CHARLES

229103

*Yet sought they neither recompense nor praise,
Nor to be mentioned in another breath
Than their blue-coated comrades whose great days
It was their pride to share, ay, share even to the death.
Nay, rather, France, to you they rendered thanks
(Seeing they came for honor, not for gain),
Who, opening to them your glorious ranks,
Gave them that grand occasion to excel,
That chance to live the life most free from stain
And that rare privilege of dying well.*

ALAN SEEGER

PREFACE

NO NOVEL of war or of exotic adventure can compare in interest with the plain, true story of the little group of American citizens who volunteered to fight for France in the early days of the World War and went into the historic Foreign Legion. Fiction writers have imagined nothing more thrilling and more splendidly heroic than the deeds of some of these men, nor can be pictured anything greater or more stirring than moments that came to them; words cannot describe fatigue and hardships and suffering more bitter than they at times knew. Nor were romance and humor absent from their story.

Looking back over the American volunteers of the Foreign Legion a decade after the ending of the terrible struggle in which they played their rôle, they appear as a whole an exceptionally fine lot of men. They came from all walks of life, from every stratum of society represented in their broad country; the motives that brought them into the service of France were many and varied, but most of them had something in common that seems unusually fine and precious in this materialistic post-war age, an unconscious idealism and simple courage linked with a splendid disinterestedness that appears all too rarely nowadays.

Some of the volunteers stand out especially: Victor Chapman, Henry Farnsworth, and Alan Seeger, that great poet of the World War, all three idealists of the most lofty type; Kenneth Weeks, who felt that in fighting for France he was defending his own home and mother; Kiffin Rockwell, with his fierce love for France and sense of a personal debt to Lafayette and Rochambeau; Dr. David E. Wheeler, who served first as a surgeon in a hospital near the front and became so inflamed with rage at

Preface

what he saw and heard there that he simply had to get out and fight as a private soldier in the Legion; Ivan Nock, who confided to a friend that from the day war was declared his conscience kept him filled with shame that an able-bodied man should remain out of the conflict, until it forced him to leave his post in the silver mines of Peru and come to face death in France.

There were Edward Stone and William Thaw, who had enjoyed the good things of life in France and could not see the country in danger without lending a helping hand; Frederick Zinn, who after finishing college came to Europe for a holiday, and decided he could best spend it fighting the Germans; Dennis Dowd, who crossed the ocean and joined the Legion because a girl refused to marry him, and found happiness in his service as a soldier; Earl Fike, who from a sheer liking for mystery enlisted in the Legion under the name of John Smith; Russell Kelly and Arthur Barry, whose Irish blood would not let them stay out of a fight; John Bowe, with the spirit of a true Crusader; Lawrence Scanlan, with a quiet but indomitable courage; Edmond Genet and Edgar Bouligny, drawn by some deep and unanalyzed feeling back to the defense of the country their forebears had left generations before to become noted in the early annals of the United States; Jack Casey, who fought to repay France for the hospitality he had received as an art student in Paris; Paul Pavelka and Billy Thorin, sailor lads to whom the war was at first just one more adventure and who finally felt it to be the greatest and finest adventure of all; Alvan Sanborn, to whom age was no handicap; Eugene Jacob, the elderly Woonsocket butcher, conspicuous for his intense hatred of the Germans; Frank Whitmore and Ferdinand Capdevielle, those splendid and patient soldiers; Christopher Charles, who managed to keep his youthful enthusiasm throughout four years of hardest warfare; Brooke Bonnell and Joseph Lydon, who left legs but not their spirit on the battlefield. And dozens of others equally distinguished in one way or another.

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Of the fourscore and ten American volunteers who served honorably at the front in France in the ranks of the Foreign Legion, thirty-eight were killed in action or died of wounds. Most of the survivors were wounded from one to four times. Eight were decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honor, twenty-one with the *Médaille Militaire*, and fifty-two with the *Croix de Guerre*. The little band of fighters won over one hundred citations in the Orders of the Day. Six of them became officers in the French Army, and ten received commissions in the American Army after the United States came into the war; two were Lieutenant-Colonels and two Majors at the end of 1918.

One does not need superlatives to write the history of these men and of their comrades from many lands. They could receive no higher praise than the unembellished recital of their deeds. And their story is the whole story of the World War in France.

In preparing this work I have consulted the official records of the French Ministry of War and of the Foreign Legion; the hundreds of war letters I received from the American Volunteer Legionnaires; my own personal notes and articles contributed to the 'Chicago Daily News' and other periodicals, and various volumes of letters and memoirs written during the war by the volunteers.

I am especially grateful to Mr. and Mrs. William Farnsworth, Mr. James E. Kelly, Mr. Charles L. Seeger, Mr. Frederic M. Stone, and Mrs. Alice S. Weeks, for the documents, photographs, and suggestions they have given me, and I also wish to thank Mr. John Jay Chapman and The Macmillan Company for their kind permission to quote from the book of 'Victor Chapman's Letters from France;' Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons for allowing me to use extracts from the 'War Letters' of Alan Seeger and Edmond Charles Clinton Genet; and Messrs. Doubleday, Doran and Company for their con-

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sent to quote from James Rogers McConnell's 'Flying for France.'

A number of books have been published giving the letters and notes of American volunteers who fought for France in the Foreign Legion during the World War; the best of which are:

John Bowe: 'A Soldier of the Legion.' Minneapolis, privately printed, 1918.

Victor Chapman: 'Letters from France.' New York, The Macmillan Company, 1917.

Henry Weston Farnsworth: 'Letters.' Boston, privately printed, 1916.

Edmond Charles Clinton Genet: 'War Letters.' New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918.

Russell Kelly: 'Kelly of the Foreign Legion.' New York, Mitchell Kennerley, 1917.

David Wooster King: 'L. M. 8046.' New York, Duffield and Company, 1927.

James Rogers McConnell: 'Flying for France.' New York, Doubleday, Page and Company, 1917.

Kiffin Yates Rockwell: 'War Letters.' New York, Doubleday, Page and Company, 1925.

Alan Seeger: 'Letters and Diary'; 'Poems.' New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917.

Kenneth Weeks: 'A Soldier of the Legion.' London, George Allen and Unwin, Limited, 1916.

Among the books in French dealing with the Foreign Volunteers of 1914-18 may be mentioned the excellent and official 'Historique du Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère'; Albert Erlande's splendid volume: 'En Campagne avec la Légion Étrangère,' published in Paris by Payot et Cie., in 1917. Also:

Édouard Junod: 'Lettres et Souvenirs.' Paris, Georges Crès et Cie., 1918.

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V. Lebedev: 'Souvenirs d'un Volontaire Russe.' Paris, Perrin et Cie., 1917.

Capitaine C. Marabibi: 'Les Garibaldiens de l'Argonne.' Paris, Payot et Cie., 1917.

PAUL AYRES ROCKWELL

Paris, May 22, 1930.

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American Fighters

IN THE FOREIGN LEGION

Chapter I

IN TRAINING

WAR had not even been declared between France and Germany in August, 1914, before foreigners began offering their services to France in case of hostilities. The Italians were the first to act: on the evening of July 31, over three thousand of them who were living in Paris met, and, after numerous and enthusiastic speeches, voted to form an Italian legion to fight for France.

A group of foreigners of various nationalities residing in Paris also got together on July 31, and had published in the Paris newspapers of August 1 the following brief appeal:

The hour is grave.

Every man worthy of the name should act to-day, should forbid himself to remain inactive in the midst of the most formidable conflagration history has ever enregistered.

Any hesitation would be a crime.

No words, actions.

Foreigners, friends of France, who during their sojourn in France have learned to love and cherish her as a second country, feel an imperious need to offer her their arms.

Intellectuals, students, workmen, able-bodied men of all sorts — born elsewhere, domiciled here — we who have found in France spiritual nourishment or material food, we group ourselves together in a solid band of volunteers placed in the service of the greatest France.

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The proclamation was signed by Canudo, an Italian, Blaise Cendrars, a Swiss, both well-known writers, and a score of others of various callings and nationalities.

News of the mobilization of the French Army set foreigners all over France aflame with desire to take a part in the hostilities every one now realized were inevitable. Following the example of the Italians, on August 2 began the enrolment of different volunteer corps composed of Alsatians and Lorrainers, Turks, Russians and other Slavs, Greeks, followed within the next day or two by the Belgians, Hollanders, English, Swiss, Negroes from Martinique and Guadeloupe, Poles, Roumanians, Armenians, and Syrians.

An appeal was made to Americans on August 5, prominent among the signers of which were René Phélizot, of Chicago; William Thaw, of Pittsburgh; Jules James Bach, of St. Louis and Paris; and James Stewart Carstairs, of Philadelphia.

Nearly every day during that hectic first fortnight of August, 1914, announcement was made of the formation of new foreign volunteer corps, including Spanish, Luxembourgers, Portuguese, Brazilians, Czechs, Ruthenians, Croats, Serbs, Slovagnes, Slovenes, Mexicans, South Americans, Scandinavians; over eight hundred German and Austrian residents of France even offered themselves as soldiers against their native lands.

Where there were only a few men from one country, not enough to form a separate corps, they joined with the volunteers of some other nation. The 'American Volunteer Corps' especially was a veritable Foreign Legion in itself: less than one third of its members were authentic American citizens, and fully half did not speak English. Among the interesting characters were Rif Bear, an Egyptian; a brown-skinned little man from Ceylon, who was promptly dubbed 'Gunga Din' by the Americans; Irishmen and Australians who wanted to fight, but did not care to enroll with the English; there were two tall, splendid Scandinavians, Baron von Krogh, a Norwegian, and

In Training

Elov Nilson, a Swede, who came with the Americans in order to perfect their knowledge of the English language.

In the mean while, some Americans other than those already living in France were offering their services to the French Government. Edgar J. Bouligny, of New Orleans, on August 3 went to see the French Consul-General in his home city, and induced that official to embark him for France along with a boatload of French reservists who had been called to the colors. Bouligny was a direct descendant of General Dominique de Bouligny, who commanded Napoleon's troops in Louisiana, and who remained in America after the purchase of the Louisiana Territory by Jefferson, becoming the first Senator from the State of Louisiana to the United States Congress. From infancy Edgar Bouligny spoke perfect French. Running away from home at the age of fourteen, he had numerous adventures in various parts of the world, including such experiences as sailing before the mast on tramp vessels, working in the Alaska salmon-packing factories, serving in the United States Army in the Philippines, and prospecting for gold in Mexico. Having many family traditions connected with France, Bouligny could not see the war occur without desiring to engage in the defense of the land of his ancestors. ✓

Also on August 3, Kiffin and Paul Rockwell wrote from Atlanta, Georgia, to the French Consul-General at New Orleans, offering to fight for France against Germany. The founder of their family in America, William Rockwell, came from England in 1630, but they had always been proud of a strain of French blood in their veins, coming through French Huguenots who had settled in South Carolina after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and a French royalist refugee who came to South Carolina during the French Revolution. Learning that they could secure passage on the American liner Saint Paul sailing from New York on August 7, they did not wait for a reply from the Consul-General, but embarked for Europe.

American Fighters in the Foreign Legion

About the same time, Ferdinand Capdevielle, George Delpeuch, and Robert Soubiran, of New York, all three American citizens whose families were of French extraction, Dennis Dowd, of Brooklyn, and Charles Trinkard, of Ozone Park, New York, also set sail for Europe to enlist under the French colors.

2

The French Government was quite taken aback and totally unprepared for such a spontaneous and whole-hearted movement of so many thousands of foreigners in favor of France. Count Albert de Mun, a leading Deputy, was moved to exclaim at a session of the Chamber of Deputies: 'La France a des volontaires étrangers, l'Allemagne, elle, a des déserteurs!' (France has foreign volunteers, Germany has deserters!) It is a striking fact that while hosts of foreigners were offering themselves to France, no such movement was taking place in Germany, and there is no record of foreign volunteers in the German Army.

There was no way under existing laws for a foreigner to enter the French Army except by signing an enlistment for five years in the Foreign Legion, but this difficulty was quickly overcome. The 'Journal Officiel' of August 8 published the following decree, dated August 3, 1914:

Enlistments of foreigners in the foreign regiments are received for the duration of the war.

The Minister of War authorized the formation of special 'marching regiments' of the Foreign Legion to receive the volunteers, with a nucleus of veteran Legionnaires brought from the Colonies. To avoid encumbering the railway trains, barracks, and training camps, however, it was decided that no enlistments of foreigners for the duration of the war would be received before the twentieth day following the mobilization of the French Army.



A MILITARY CEREMONY IN THE COURT OF HONOR, HÔTEL DES INVALIDES

Here the foreign volunteers were received into the Foreign Legion, August 21, 1914

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This delay in being allowed to sign formal enlistment papers did not cool the enthusiasm and war spirit of the foreign volunteers. Headquarters were established for the various corps by their respective committees in different parts of Paris, where during the days of waiting new men were continually arriving from all corners of the globe.

The Americans started drilling in the garden of the Palais Royal, which during the early days of the French Revolution had been so filled with the clamors of the mob and the wild harangues of political agitators. Charles Sweeny, of Spokane, Washington, a one-time West Point cadet who had been living in France for several years, served as instructor. The English volunteers drilled at the 'Magic City' amusement park, under the orders of C. V. Rapier, a former British officer during the Boer War.

The acceptance of the foreign volunteers into the French Army began on August 21. Marching behind the flags of their countries, early in the morning of that historic day the different corps went to the Hôtel des Invalides, where they were officially welcomed by representatives of the French Government and Army. The physical examination of the men by French Army doctors started at once. The military authorities had at first said that this task must be terminated by August 25, so as to leave the doctors and examination rooms free for other purposes, but the foreigners came forward in such thousands that this time limit had to be extended.

Frenchmen who saw the ceremony at the Hôtel des Invalides on August 21 were deeply touched and comforted. Robert de Flers, the great writer and member of the French Academy, said in a leading article in the Paris 'Figaro' of the next day:

It seemed that suddenly all the sacrifices, all the devotedness, all the heroic and disinterested *gestes* which have made it said that to write the history of generosity one has only to write the history of France, all that which Bismarck called our foolish confidence and which we

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call our point of honor, it seemed that all this received in one instant, as an incomparable recompense, this moving homage to which each people wished to contribute its part of courage and of blood.

3

Training camps for the foreign volunteers had been prepared at Rouen, Toulouse, Orléans, Blois, Bayonne, and Avignon, and as rapidly as the men were passed by the military doctors, they were sent to one of these centers. Men of the same nationality were kept together as much as possible.

The first group of American volunteers to leave Paris entrained for Rouen on the morning of August 25, marching from the gathering place at the Palais Royal to the Gare Saint-Lazare behind a large United States flag carried by Phélizot and Seeger. Huge crowds cheering wildly lined the Avenue de l'Opéra, the Place de l'Opéra, the Rue Auber, and other streets through which the volunteers passed. The men were dressed in their oldest civilian clothes, and wore almost every shape of straw, felt, and derby hats; most of them carried bundles or small valises. They had been instructed to encumber themselves as little as possible, and to take with them only their least valued possessions. The very unmilitary aspect of the group added, if anything, to the enthusiasm of the throngs wishing them Godspeed.

Included among the Americans sent to Rouen were Charles Beaumont and Charles Boismaure, of New York; John Jacob Casey, of San Francisco; the Charton brothers, John and Louis, of New York; Herman Chatkoff, of Brooklyn; Harry C. Collins, of Boston; Emil Dufour, of Butler, Pennsylvania; Joseph W. Ganson, of New York; Theodore Haas, of Cleveland, Ohio; Louis Haefle, of Buffalo, New York; Bert Hall, of Higginsville, Missouri; Charles Hoffecker, of San Francisco; David King, of Providence, Rhode Island; Nick Karayinis, of New York; Fred

In Training

Landreaux, of New Orleans; Edward Morlae, of San Francisco; Thomas F. McAllister, of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Jack Noe, of Glendale, Long Island; Siegfried Narvitz, of New York; Achilles Olinger, of New York; Robert Percy, of New Orleans; Tony Paullet, of New York; Bob Scanlon, of Mobile, Alabama; Alan Seeger, of New York; Edward Mandell Stone, of Chicago and New Bedford, Massachusetts; the Towle brothers, Ellingwood and Bertrand, of Larchmount, New York; Rupert Van Vorst, of Cincinnati, Ohio; Frederick W. Zinn, of Battle Creek, Michigan.

In addition, there were the men already mentioned: René Phélizot, William Thaw, Jules James Bach, James Stewart Carstairs, Edgar John Bouligny, Kiffin Yates and Paul Ayres Rockwell, Ferdinand Capdevielle, George Delpauch, Robert Soubiran, Dennis Dowd, Charles Trinkard, and Charles Sweeny.

The Americans were a most heterogeneous crowd. Many of them were living or travelling in Europe when the war broke out. Casey and Carstairs were artists, both well known in the Paris Latin Quarter. Alan Seeger was a writer whose poetry was already becoming favorably known. Bert Hall was a talkative adventurer of many trades, his latest having been that of driving a Paris taxicab. Chatkoff had come abroad following a quarrel with his family and becoming stranded in Paris had been washing automobiles in a garage before joining the volunteer corps.

Hoffecker was a mining engineer, and had lately made a long stay prospecting in Crete, where he was said to have discovered valuable mineral deposits. Ganson's last known profession was that of tutor; he had a trend toward religious mysticism and writing poetry of a sort.

Collins was an ex-sailor in the United States Navy, from which his comrades suspected him of being a deserter, and had been tramping about Europe for some two years. Narvitz had

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been a professor of philosophy, and Olinger a language instructor at Columbia University.

Although both Haeffle and Landreaux were born in the United States and were American citizens, neither spoke English. Haeffle was a typical Parisian *apache*, with the vices and qualities of his kind; Landreaux was a mild-mannered actor, especially appreciated by theatre-goers in French provincial playhouses.

Phélizot was one of the best-known big-game hunters and elephant-killers in Africa, where he had lived for years. Morlae claimed to have been everywhere and to have done everything. He evidently had been many times around the globe as a sailor on wind-jammers and other vessels, and had served with the United States Army in the Philippine Islands. He gave his latest occupation as that of well-digger in California.

Dowd was a young lawyer, a graduate from the Law School of Columbia University, after having taken his A.B. degree at Georgetown University.

Percy and Scanlon were both good Southern Negroes who had followed Jack Johnson to France. Percy was a barber by trade, and Scanlon a boxer. Tony Paullet, of French-American origin, was also known in New York sporting circles as a good lightweight boxer. Boismaure was a pharmacist, and Beaumont a dry-goods salesman.

Nick Karayinis emigrated from Greece to America when a tiny lad, and had helped his uncle run a fruit-stand under a Sixth Avenue Elevated station in New York. His uncle had bitterly opposed his coming to Europe to engage in the war. Trinkard was a jeweller's engraver; Capdevielle the son of a New York fencing-master and employed in a steamship company's office before offering his service to France. Delpauch had been assistant to his father, who was chef at the Hotel Lorraine, New York.

Bach was a mechanical engineer, and had spent a good part of



AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS IN THE SECOND FOREIGN REGIMENT, PARIS, AUGUST, 1914

In Training

his life in Europe. Stone was for years in the United States Diplomatic Service. He was a Harvard graduate; Carstairs, Ganson, King, and Seeger had also attended that college.

Casey had studied at the Mark Hopkins Department of Fine Arts of the University of California; the Art Students' League in New York; at the Boston Museum and the New York School of Fine Arts. He had frequently exhibited his paintings with success at expositions in America, and in Paris at the Salon des Artistes Français.

Thaw, a former Yale student, was one of the first Americans to learn to fly an aeroplane. He had flown much in hydroplanes along the French Riviera, and his ambition was to get into the French Army aviation service. He had offered himself as pilot at the outbreak of hostilities, but being refused decided at once to enlist in the infantry.

Kiffin Rockwell had been a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute, and Paul Rockwell a student at Wake Forest College; both of them had later attended Washington and Lee University. Van Vorst had studied medicine at Yale, and was *en route* for a visit to Europe when war was declared. Zinn was a member of the 1914 class in civil engineering at the University of Michigan, and after graduation had crossed the Atlantic to spend the summer touring Europe. The outbreak of hostilities caused him to alter his plans, and he became a soldier fighting against the country from which his grandparents had emigrated to America after the Revolution of 1848. Soubiran was an expert mechanic and driver of racing automobiles.

A number of the volunteers possessed independent fortunes. Almost every one of them gave up a good situation with excellent promise for the future, to undergo hardships and risks for France.

The American volunteers sent to Rouen remained there only a few days. The Germans were steadily advancing on Paris, winning victory after victory, and it looked as if the capital must fall. The French Government fled to Bordeaux, and orders were given to move all concentration points and training camps for green troops far away from the danger zone. The two thousand foreign volunteers assembled at Rouen were loaded onto freight cars on the morning of September 1, and, after a crowded and uncomfortable ride of four days and nights across France, arrived at Toulouse, within sight of the Pyrenees Mountains marking the Spanish frontier.

The volunteers were installed at the Pérignon Barracks, in the outskirts of the city. They were still in civilian clothes, very much bedraggled by this time, and had as yet no military equipment of any kind except the indispensable canteen. The handful of officers and non-coms in command seemed greatly perplexed as to how to handle so motley and unpromising a lot of recruits, many of whom did not understand one word of French.

The routine of barracks life was established immediately. Hot black coffee, already sweetened, was served at dawn, and with the liquid one ate any bit of bread that might be left over from the previous day's ration. The men were divided into squads and sections, and with corporals and sergeants in charge, made brisk marches into the country for exercise, returning to barracks for a first meal or *soupe* at ten-thirty. This repast consisted of a bountiful and usually succulent stew of meat and vegetables or rice, ladled out of huge *marmites* into the outstretched canteens, with cheese, jam, or a piece of fruit or chocolate as dessert. Once in a while a tin of sardines was distributed for every two men, or the cook made some sort of pudding. The day's allowance of half a large loaf of palatable Army bread per

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man was always issued just before this first meal. On Sundays, a fourth-litre of red wine was served.

The meal finished, an hour's freedom in barracks was given, after which the squads were put to work at cleaning up the barracks and grounds, peeling potatoes, and various other tasks. Next came drilling and other military instruction in the barracks ground, until the second and last meal of the day, very much like the first except for a difference in the composition of the stew, was served at four-thirty o'clock.

The men were given liberty to go into the city from five until nine o'clock. Those who had money usually dined at one of the various restaurants for which Toulouse is celebrated, instead of partaking of the evening fare provided at the barracks. All the volunteers took advantage of the opportunity to mingle with the crowds in the streets and cafés, watching the bulletins outside the newspaper offices, and wandering about exploring the highways and byways according to individual tastes. Toulouse has many barracks and hospitals, and was crowded with soldiers awaiting orders to go to the front; occasionally there would be one who had already been in the fighting and was convalescing from slight wounds. Such a man's tales were always listened to with great interest and respect.

5

The volunteers had been at Toulouse for about five days when they were aroused early in the morning by the sound of martial music. Rushing to their windows, they looked out across the courtyard upon a thrilling spectacle. Several hundred veteran Legionnaires of the Second Foreign Regiment, freshly arrived from North Africa, were marching through the gateway into the Pérignon Barracks. Erect and keeping perfect step to the music of their famous regimental band, their uniforms of dark blue-gray greatcoats held in around the waist by

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broad blue sashes, white duck trousers, black shoes with short black leather leggings, all spotlessly clean and neat, and their arms and equipment shining in the morning sunlight like burnished silver, this first contact with the old-time Legionnaires made a striking impression on the untrained, unkempt neophytes. More than one of the latter suddenly realized with pride that at last he was really a member of the most celebrated and romantic fighting corps in the world, which had stained with its blood four continents, and had won eternal glory by its countless acts of heroism.

The greater part of the history of the Foreign Legion in which the volunteers were to serve had been, until the World War, the history of the conquest and organization of France's Colonial Empire. France has had foreign soldiers in her service since she first began to be a nation. History records the Scotch, Irish, and Polish Guards, the Lansquenets, the Swiss Guards who so nobly defended the Kings of France, the various foreign regiments formed by Napoleon the Great, the Hohenlohe Regiment, among others which at different times in her perilous course served France with a devotion and loyalty that raises them far above the ordinary mercenary troops.

The Foreign Legion of modern times was organized by a law of March 9, 1831, followed by a royal ordinance of Louis-Philippe on March 10. Paris was swarming with Polish refugees who had fled their native land after revolutionary activities there, and it was primarily to provide an outlet for their restless energies and keep them from stirring up trouble in France that Louis-Philippe formed the new corps. Algiers had just been occupied, and it was decreed that the Foreign Legion should be used only for service outside France.

Companies of the Legion took part in all the expeditions in Algeria, conquering, colonizing, and building up the provinces. This early page of the Legion's history is full of such accounts as that of the heroic defense of the Marabout of Sidi-Moham-



AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS LEAVING FOR ROUEN, AUGUST 25, 1914
CROSSING THE PLACE DE L'OPÉRA, PARIS

The four men in line just behind the flag (right) are (left to right): Elov Nilson, Alan Seeger, Dennis Dowd, Ferdinand Capdevielle. René Phélizot is carrying the large flag; he was relieved from time to time by Seeger



VARIOUS FOREIGN VOLUNTEER CORPS ARRIVING
At the Gare St.-Lazare, Paris, to entrain for Rouen, August 25, 1914

In Training

med, where twenty-seven *Legionnaires* and their lieutenant struggled against one thousand Arabs.

The siege of Milianah was another exploit typical of the Legion. Shut up in the town, seven hundred and fifty *Legionnaires* opposed an entire army of Arabs, holding them back for four months, until help arrived. When the siege was finally raised, two hundred and eight sick and wounded men greeted the rescuers. The rest were dead.

Later, when the northern provinces of Algeria were subdued and peaceful, the Legion formed the advance guard for French penetration southward. Everywhere, after the work of conquest was complete, the *Legionnaires* laid down their arms and turned pioneers. They worked even harder in the colonization than in the conquest, building roads and cities almost as if by magic. They were by turns farmers, engineers, architects, whatever the occasion demanded that they be. Their work in Algeria may justly be compared with that of Cæsar's legions. Certainly nowhere else in history is found anything like it.

During the struggles in Spain from 1835 to 1839 between Queen Isabella II and the Carlists, the Legion was loaned to the Queen, by a treaty of January 28, 1835, between France, England, Spain, and Portugal, and rendered valiant service to her cause. One of the noteworthy episodes of this campaign was the defence of the Terapegui Blockhouse, which one thousand *Legionnaires* held successfully against six thousand Carlists during an all-day hand-to-hand struggle.

The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854 again called the Legion from its cradle, Algeria, and its reputation was still further glorified. At the battle of the Alma, when General Canrobert was sending officer after officer in a vain effort to recall his disorganized troops to order, he happened to see a company of the Legion, manœuvring as calmly as if on the exercise field, and he called on the *Legionnaires* to set the example to the other troops, giving them the title by which

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they have been known since in the French Army, 'la brave Légion.'

At Sebastopol and at Inkermann the Legion gave such distinguished service that by way of a general recognition, the Emperor Napoleon III issued a naturalization *en masse* to all its officers and men who served in the battles.

In Italy in 1859, at the battles of Magenta and Solferino, the Legion won decorations and promotions galore.

The next campaign of the Legion is of more interest to Americans than these first enumerated, for it took place in Mexico, during the ill-fated attempt of Maximilian to establish a French empire in the New World. If the United States had not been so torn and disrupted during the early sixties, such names as Cajacca, Santa Ysabel, and Camaron might not ring so unfamiliarly in American ears.

Camaron¹ especially deserves to be rescued from oblivion. For unflagging courage in a desperate struggle against overwhelming odds, this fight should stand in the front ranks in annals of American warfare, alongside such battles as the Alamo and Custer's last stand in the Valley of the Big Horn.

Sixty-two Legionnaires, with three officers, *en route* to meet two convoys coming from Vera Cruz, were surprised in open plain by a troop of Mexicans over two thousand in number, at dawn on April 30, 1863. Forming a square, the Legionnaires fought their way through the assailing hordes to an isolated adobe house near the village of Camaron, and barricaded themselves in one of its two rooms, the other being occupied by the enemy.

That the Mexicans might be delayed as long as possible from marching on the unsuspecting convoys, the Legionnaires took a deliberate oath to defend themselves until death, and actually allowed themselves to be killed one by one, taking a large toll of Mexicans for each Legionnaire who fell. The enemy, loath to

¹ Also spelled Camerone.

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kill such brave men, several times called on them to surrender, but each time the proposal was refused.

For one instant, toward noon, the Legionnaires thought themselves saved, when clarion calls were heard in the distance. But it was not their regiment arriving to the rescue; it was three fresh battalions of Mexicans coming to join the attack.

The outbuildings around the courtyard of the house were set afire late in the afternoon, and the flames and smoke drove the few surviving defenders out into the open. All of them fell during a bitter bayonet charge; nineteen were picked up badly wounded, and the following day a regiment of French soldiers arrived on the scene of the terrific struggle and buried the dead. The name of Camaron was carved in letters of gold on the walls of the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris, and inscribed on the flag of the Legion.

The Legion's first service in France was during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, when it received into its ranks hundreds of foreign volunteers, among them a young Balkan prince who later became the King Pierre I of Serbia, and an American, Pierre Chouteau, of St. Louis, Missouri, whose nephew, Charles Chouteau Johnson, also of St. Louis, was to enlist in the Legion in 1915. It did brilliant work first with the Army of the Loire, then with the Army of the East, and was finally used to wrest Paris from the Commune, in 1871.

Sent back to France's foreign possessions, the Legion fought with its usual courage and brilliancy in the Soudan, Tonkin, Dahomey, Madagascar, and French Indo-China. Concerning its work in Dahomey, its commanding officer, General Dodds, said: 'The Legion has been marvellous; without it we never could have overcome the superhuman resistance of the Dahomeans. I never have had the honor of commanding more admirable soldiers; one can ask anything of them.'

The Legion had been sent back to Africa in 1895, after finishing its subduing and constructive work in Madagascar, when in

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1896 the situation again became critical. The French Government asked General Galliéni, commander of the island, what assistance he needed to assure French dominion. He replied that the troops already with him seemed sufficient to him, but that he would like to have 'six hundred men of the Foreign Legion, to show the others in the last extremity how to die decently.'

When the conquest of Morocco began in 1907, the Foreign Legion was in the front ranks among the occupation troops. Almost all the men who marched into the courtyard of the Pérignon Barracks in early September, 1914, had participated in the ceaseless campaigns against the wild Berber tribes and Arabs of what Marshal Lyautey termed 'France's Wild West.' Coming to France to face the German invaders, they brought with them the spirit that had caused General Deligny to say to his soldiers: 'Soldiers of the Legion, the folds of your flag are not broad enough to hold all your claims to glory.'

6

Drilling of the volunteers became more strenuous with the arrival of the old Legionnaires. Coarse white fatigue uniforms were issued that very day, and the men marched to the Toulouse Arsenal, where they were given their rifles and bayonets, knapsacks, haversacks, and various other equipment. Any of the men already possessing shoes, shirts, underwear, and other clothing suitable for army wear were given a cash allowance in payment for them, instead of having new articles issued to them. Some of the volunteers received tidy sums in this way.

The squads, sections, and companies were reorganized, veterans being mixed in with the novices, to aid by example in their instruction. Forced marches many miles into the country, or along the banks of the river Garonne were made daily, and training given in drilling, target-practice, digging trenches, advancing under shell and machine-gun fire and protecting one's

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self therefrom, tent-pitching, and other exercises necessary to the soldier. The men made mock bayonet charges, and jumping into trenches stabbed furiously straw-stuffed dummies placed there.

The days soon became tiresome and monotonous, however, with few incidents to enliven the hours. Often the volunteers were too weary from the day's work to go into the city at five o'clock, but would go to bed immediately after the evening *soupe*. Money became scarce, and the mails being disorganized, more than one man felt the sting of being absolutely penniless in a strange land. Thaw, Phélizot, Bach, Carstairs, and one or two others had brought along what they thought was an ample supply of funds, but it soon ran low through being shared with comrades. The wage of a private soldier in the French Army and the Foreign Legion was a *sou* (one cent) a day. Pay-day came every ten days, and three of the ten *sous* due were taken out in payment for tobacco distributed at the same time. The few non-smokers thought this rather hard on them at first, but soon found that they could always dispose of their half-package of *tabac* at a good price.

A call for volunteers with previous military experience under fire, to accompany the veterans to the front, was made on September 12. Almost to a man, the Americans stepped forward, and those who held back were quickly shamed or brow-beaten by their comrades into joining them. Each man was questioned concerning the campaigns in which he had fought, and an astonishing number of South and Central American revolutions were mentioned. Chatkoff, always a jester, gravely stated that he had served for five years as a soldier of the Salvation Army. The old Legion non-com taking the information had never heard of that corps, and solemnly recorded Chatkoff's declaration in his notebook. Jack Casey, Kiffin and Paul Rockwell, Alan Seeger, and Bill Thaw claimed to have been in the Mexican Army, and when their corporal commented upon

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their awkwardness at drill informed him that the fighting in Mexico was always guerrilla warfare.

The men accepted for speedy service at the front were instructed to have their heads shaved. Chatkoff, who was very proud of his thick, wavy hair, refused to have this done, and when his officer called him up about the matter, pretended that he was a Red Indian, and that his religion compelled him to wear his hair long, so that his enemy might take a scalplock should he be killed in battle. Chatkoff was allowed to retain his hair.

Full uniforms were given to the volunteers on September 17, similar to those worn by the veteran Legionnaires when they arrived from Morocco, except that the white trousers of tropical climes were replaced by the regulation red ones of the French line regiments. The men now began to feel that they were really soldiers.

Passing the railway station on their way into the city late one afternoon, Bouligny, Zinn, and Nilson noticed an excited crowd, composed mostly of women and old men, around the doors. They went over to see what the trouble was, and their uniforms being remarked by a French officer, they were pressed into service to help a small troop of French Territorials protect a newly arrived lot of German prisoners from the maddened civilians.

Rumors of departure for the front became more and more frequent. Men of doubtful nationality and loyalty were ordered sent to Morocco, where the native tribes were seething with revolt. Two veteran Legionnaires of Teutonic extraction committed suicide, because they were included in the detachment going back to Africa. One stabbed himself with his bayonet; the other shot himself through the head just before dawn. The volunteers who were forming ranks in the Barracks courtyard preparatory to a hike heard the shot. The desperate fellow had evidently managed during target practice to secrete a cartridge with which to kill himself.



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THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF THE UNITED STATES FLAG IN THE
WORLD WAR OVER A BAND OF FIGHTING AMERICAN CITIZENS

Pérignon Barracks, Toulouse, September 30, 1914



THE SECOND FOREIGN REGIMENT LEAVING PÉRIGNON BARRACKS
TOULOUSE, SEPTEMBER 30, 1914, TO ENTRAIN FOR THE FRONT

In Training

No ammunition was issued except at the rifle-range, and a strict count of it was kept, all the empty shells being handed back to non-coms as each man fired at the target.

Bouligny was detailed to clean out a dark storeroom in the Barracks, and while handling some old blankets felt that his hands were wet. When he got out into the light, he found them covered with blood; he had picked up the blankets on which one of the suicides had lain.

Thomas McAllister broke his ankle while drilling and was invalided out of the Army. The elder Towle, Ellingwood, was also discharged from the Legion as medically unfit for service at the front. The Legion doctors gave each volunteer another thorough physical examination, and it was announced that any man who did not want to go to the front had only to say so and he would be dismissed from the Army. A number who had enlisted, thinking that the war would be short and that they would never be used for fighting, but could easily get French naturalization papers because of having volunteered, took advantage of the offer. These men were given five francs and a railway ticket back to Paris or wherever they had enlisted.

The Americans were especially glad to see go an exceptionally dirty red-bearded Turkish Jew, who had been put into their room because he spoke a little English and had made it almost unbearable by his filth. This man kept a small shop in Paris, and openly declared that he had enlisted only because it 'vood be good for his bizniss.' He had fallen down in a fit when it was first announced that the regiment would be sent to the front.

Training that in normal times spread out over six months was crammed into less than that many weeks. One thousand men of the Second Marching Regiment of the Second Foreign Regiment, forming Battalion C, fully equipped and soldierly looking, old Legionnaires who had signed up for five years' service and volunteers for the duration of the war, formed ranks

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in the courtyard of the Pérignon Barracks on the morning of September 30, ready to entrain for the front.

Photographs were taken of the regiment and its flag, the French tricolor with the motto 'VALEUR ET DISCIPLINE,' and the flags of the different volunteer corps. Alongside the flags of England, Serbia, Russia, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, and other countries was the Stars and Stripes of the United States of America, borne by René Phélizot. The flag had already been carried through the streets of Paris, Rouen, and Toulouse by men in civilian garb; now it floated over a band of American citizens in French uniform and fully armed, ready and eager to fight the Germans. The shades of Neutrality must have shivered.

Watched by jealous 'rookies' clad in dirty white fatigue suits, and others who were staying behind at the Barracks, the battalion swung out of the gates with its band gayly playing, and after a hot march through streets lined with cheering but sad people, arrived at the railway station and shortly after noon climbed into long trains of freight-cars, forty to fifty men in each car. After a cramped, cold ride of two days, enlivened by the enthusiasm of the crowds at the railway stations everywhere the train halted, the battalion arrived on October 2, early on a foggy, sunless morning, at the Camp de Mailly, in the War Zone.

Chapter II

UP TO THE FRONT

PART of the battle of the Marne had been fought around the Camp de Mailly, and much of the barracks and near-by village destroyed. There was room enough to lodge the Legionnaires, however, as the camp was the largest and most important in France, with many and modern buildings, and over twenty-seven thousand acres of land reserved for military manœuvres. Civilians were beginning to return to the region, and many and loud were the lamentations over the destruction wrought by the invaders. The *mercantis* who prey upon soldiers around every Army post in the world had already reopened their establishments, and the *bistros* (wine-shops), *marchands de frites* (fried potato sellers), and cheap restaurants speedily began making enough out of the Legionnaires to compensate for the losses caused by the Germans.

Two battalions of the Second Marching Regiment of the First Foreign Regiment, composed mostly of veteran Legionnaires, and Battalion D, from Orléans, of the Second Foreign Regiment, were also at Camp de Mailly. The days, rarely brightened by a ray of sunlight, were passed in exercises and sham battles in the pine woods around the camp. The underbrush was full of relics and wreckage of real battle, cast-off French and German haversacks and other equipment, broken guns and bent bayonets, unexploded shells, and occasionally a dead body, overlooked by the burying parties. The continuous rumble of cannon in the distance added to the reality of the scene.

Dowd and Zinn were part of a wood-gathering *corvée* outside

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the camp which captured a German soldier who was hiding in the scrub pines. Near him lay the body of another German, recently dead of starvation, and the captured man was too weak to offer resistance. He stated that there were at least forty other Germans hiding in the woods around the Camp de Mailly, there ever since the battle of the Marne, and declared that the German officers had told them the French always killed all prisoners. He seemed greatly surprised by the kindness with which he was treated, and quickly gave away all the buttons on his tattered uniform as souvenirs to Legionnaires who crowded around him at the camp while he ate ravenously.

The branch railway line from Châlons-sur-Marne to Mailly-le-Camp had been destroyed, and was not yet entirely repaired, so it was difficult to bring in enough supplies for the troops. Foraging parties marched out into the countryside to try to buy potatoes, cabbages, and other vegetables. There was at the camp a hospital for wounded horses, and many of them were slaughtered for food.

Body-lice, the soldier's greatest pest, made their appearance. Seeger was the first American to get them, and scratched in silent and maddened agony, getting little sympathy from his comrades, whose sole thought was that he might pass the parasites on to them.

The first promotions were handed out. Bouligny, Morlae, and Sweeny, all speaking good French and with previous military experience, were named corporals. Bach, Capdevielle, Phélizot, and Thaw were made first-class privates. Seeger was terribly disappointed when the nominations were read out. His ambition was to be the best soldier among the volunteers, and the equal of any of the old Legionnaires, whom he intensely admired. Although not very strong physically, he had given of his best since the day of his enlistment.

Distractions being few around the Camp de Mailly, the Americans passed many of their leisure hours playing poker,

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with which game they had whiled away the days in the train going from Rouen to Toulouse and from Toulouse to Mailly. Stakes were low, as no one was rich in ready cash.

It was announced on October 17 that the regiment would start on its march to the trenches the following day. The American volunteers all wrote their names in indelible pencil on the United States flag which had been with them ever since their enlistment in Paris, and confided it to Phélizot, who wrapped it around his waist next to his skin.

Up since four-forty, at six o'clock on the morning of Sunday, October 18, two battalions of the First Foreign Regiment and two of the Second Foreign Regiment marched out of the Camp de Mailly along the eastbound road, toward the sound of the cannon. The day was sunny, for a change, and as the men tramped along the road which wound up and down the rolling hills, they sang. The famous old marching song of the Legion —

*Nous sommes soldats de la Légion,
La Légion Étrangère;
N'ayant pas de Patrie,
La France est notre Mère*

(‘We are soldiers of the Legion, the Foreign Legion; having no country, France is our mother’) — was the favorite, with ‘*La Madelon*’ and ‘*Sous les ponts de Paris*’ close seconds.

The way lay through an immense battlefield, lined with new-made graves marked with wooden crosses on which hung the red *képis* (caps) of French soldiers or the spiked helmets of Germans, fields and woods battered and scarred by shell-fire, and occasionally ruined, blackened villages with gloomy inhabitants standing in the streets. It was the Champagne country, not yet the fertile region of the vineyards, but the sullen, sparsely cultivated part mostly given over to scrub pines, almost the only vegetation that can subsist in the chalky soil.

The Legionnaires were not depressed by the unsmiling aspect of the countryside, nor by the signs of battle. They now knew

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they were soldiers themselves, and the signs of battle were also signs of a great victory won by the French. The enemy had but lately fallen back in great disorder along the very route they were taking, and they fondly expected soon to force him back still farther.

The first night was spent at Fère-Champenoise, a half-burned town, which was reached in the early afternoon, after about fifteen miles' march. The Legion always marches for fifty minutes, then rests for ten, so the men were not yet overly tired, despite the weight of some sixty pounds' pack and equipment carried.

Vertus was reached about noon the following day, and quarters assigned for the night. The inhabitants of the quaint and ancient town told the Legionnaires that fifteen thousand Frenchmen and twenty-five thousand Germans had been killed during the fighting around there and in the near-by marshes of Saint-Gond, where the Prussian Guards were cut to pieces by troops from North Africa.

Passing through the city of Épernay, at the western foot of Reims Mountain, on the next day, the Legion climbed to the old village of Hautvillers, nestling amongst the Champagne vineyards, and encamped for the night around the eighteenth-century Benedictine Abbey, where over two hundred years previously Dom Pérignon discovered the method of preparing champagne wine. Huge bonfires were lighted, and the volunteers and veterans sat around them singing and spinning yarns until far into the night. To-morrow the real front and the trenches would be reached.

Up at four-thirty the morning of Wednesday, October 21, and off at daylight, the long columns of Legionnaires toiled painfully through the vineyards away from Hautvillers and up the

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side of Reims Mountain. They were already footsore and weary from the three previous days of marching, and before many hours had passed, men began falling out of line and resting by the wayside.

Colonel Passard, commander of the Second Foreign Regiment, who had come up from Morocco with its battalions, rode behind the line of march, rounding up the stragglers. He came to where Thaw and Carstairs were sitting on a bank by the roadside.

'What are you doing there?' he demanded of the two Americans, reigning in his horse.

'We are tired out and cannot keep up with the regiment, my Colonel,' replied Thaw.

Colonel Passard drew a large revolver from its holster.

'*Marchez!*' he roared in a terrible voice.

Thaw and Carstairs marched.

In spite of all Passard's efforts, however, it was a frayed and sorry-looking regiment that arrived at Verzy shortly after one o'clock in the afternoon. The general commanding the Thirty-Second Army Corps, to which the Legion brigade had been assigned, was at the edge of Verzy when the Legionnaires marched by, and reviewed them with sarcastic eyes.

'I asked for reënforcements,' he said to Passard. 'Do you call those fresh troops?'

It was announced that the regiment would leave for the trenches at nightfall, and the men were distributed around the town, quartered in houses, lofts, and barns. Verzy was swarming with Colonial troops. Just below the town was the battle-line, and machine-gun and rifle fire could be clearly heard; occasionally a favorable wind would waft up the sound of the voices of officers giving commands. French batteries concealed in the woods above the town were exchanging shells with the German pieces across the valley below. The smell of powder and of war was in the air.

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Verzy is about fifteen miles southwest of Reims, situated some seven hundred feet above the plain and just below one of the highest points of Reims Mountain. The vineyard-covered slopes and vast forested plateau of the mountain combine to make it one of the strongest natural fortresses in existence, and it was the grand corner-stone of the defense of Paris. The Aisne and Champagne fronts hinged together there; the line was not yet clearly defined, but the Germans seemed to be digging in on one side of the little river Vesle and the French on the other. The Champagne vineyards which stretched for miles below and to each side of Verzy were already criss-crossed with trenches, and it was whispered among the Legionnaires that the barbed-wire entanglements in front of them were heavily charged with electricity, to help hinder the enemy should he attack suddenly.

The order to go to the trenches at dusk was rescinded, and the Legionnaires gladly settled down to try to get a good night's rest. Most of the Americans were lodged in a huge loft filled with hay, and some of them discovered a particularly attractive corner behind a partition. They had just got themselves installed when Fred Zinn came stumbling into their preserve. Zinn was afflicted with a terrible habit of snoring, and was therefore greatly dreaded at night by his comrades. They tried to drive him away, but even threats with bayonets were of no avail. The best they could get was Zinn's promise that they might beat him in the face with their hobnailed shoes without arousing his anger, if he snored.

The old Legion non-coms, greatly excited by the arrival at the much-discussed front, and having in mind the surprise night attacks made by their old Berber and Arab adversaries in Morocco, ordered their men to sleep with equipment on and rifles strapped to their wrists, so as to be quickly found in the dark. The men were also told not to take off their shoes, but this order was not complied with.

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Despite the hay, the loft was very cold, and the Americans were glad to get up four hours after midnight and light a small fire downstairs in the courtyard. They formed ranks with the rest of their battalion at sunrise, and marched two kilometres around the mountain-side to another small Champagne town, Verzenay, halting *en route* by a post which bore a placard stating that against it had been shot three traitors, caught signalling to the enemy. One was a youthful vineyard worker, who had agreed to betray his country for the sum of fifty francs a month. With a lantern from the mountain-side he would indicate to the Germans across the way the departure of French troops by night for the trenches, and losses were heavy from resultant machine-gun and artillery fire.

At Verzenay, the Americans and others of their section took up quarters in a stable at the end of the town looking out toward the battle-lines. They replaced a troop of Senegalese riflemen, and installed themselves on the straw left behind by the coal-black warriors. Within a few hours, every one was aware that the Africans had left something behind in the straw; the entire section was literally devoured by a peculiarly savage and aggressive variety of 'cootie.' From then on, the Legionnaires struggled with an enemy far more troublesome than Germans, cold, or hunger.

The Americans were now under fire for the first time. The Germans shelled Verzenay regularly, but most of the shells landed higher up in the town than where they were quartered. The Legionnaires were ordered to remain indoors most of the time during the day. Enemy aeroplanes flew low overhead frequently, observing and regulating artillery fire, and the Legionnaires would crowd into the courtyards and fire useless volleys at them. Some of the men swore they saw German airmen lean forward and wave derisively at them.

At night, a battalion of the First Foreign Regiment went down into the trenches, while men of the Second did guard

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duty around the town, especially watching out for spies signaling to the enemy. The panorama from in front of the building occupied by the Americans was wonderful. The battlefield could be seen for miles and miles: to the left, almost to Reims, and to the right, stretching away as far as the eye could reach toward the Argonne. Flashes from rifles and machine guns twinkled up and down the valley like intermittent fireflies, while less frequently came the lights from bellowing cannon and exploding shell. Very lights and star rockets cast an unearthly glare over the scene from time to time. Veteran officers and men, bemedalled from Colonial wars, watched the spectacle with as eager an interest as the greenest volunteer.

Indoors, conditions were not so thrilling, especially in the stable occupied by the Americans. There was no window, and next to the only door were several old Legionnaires, who on no condition would allow it to remain open longer than necessary for entrance or exit. The air was thick and close, and foul with a hundred odors, and the men were packed in so tightly that there was hardly room to turn over when lying down. To add to that, the stalls in which they lay were very short, painfully so for the taller members of the company. And the lice were even more famished by night than by day.

The following day, the battalion climbed up to the mountain-top, and marched across a swampy part of the plateau to a point from which was had a marvellous view of Reims and the surrounding battle-sector. Shells were breaking over the city and cathedral, and across the Aisne Canal and river Vesle stood forth the forts and heights from which the German artillery was firing.

A long contemplation of the scene was prevented by the appearance of German aeroplanes, and the Legionnaires scattered into the underbrush like chickens seeking shelter from a hawk. When the aeroplanes passed on, they cut firewood until each man was sufficiently laden, and marched back to Verzenay.

A strange sight at Verzenay were the grape-gatherers, of whom several hundred were assembled in the town for the vintage, then in full swing. Most of them were girls and women of all ages, but there were a few boys and old men. Heedless of shells and bullets, these people spent the days picking grapes in the vineyards between and about the battle-lines. They were quartered in stables and lofts, much like the Legionnaires, and made merry at night with song and dancing. Some of the old Legionnaires managed to gain admittance to their quarters, and joined in the festivities. Some amazing stories were told about the welcome given the veterans by the younger women.

The stay at Verzenay was short. On October 25, it was announced that the Second Foreign Regiment would leave the next morning for an unknown destination, the First Regiment remaining behind in the Champagne sector. The men were told to lighten their packs, and to discard everything that was not absolutely essential.

The regiment was up before the sun; most of the men climbed into motor-busses and rattled off toward the north. The Ninth Squad was detailed to act as guard for the mule-drawn convoy of supply wagons.

The Ninth Squad was composed of the tallest men in Battalion C of the Second Foreign Regiment: Ferdinand Capdevielle, Stewart Carstairs, Harry Collins, Dennis Dowd, Kiffin and Paul Rockwell, Alan Seeger, and William Thaw; two English volunteers, Booth and Buchanan; Krogh, the Norwegian, and Nilson, the Swede; Hubmajer, a twenty-four-year-old Serb, already covered with scars from numerous Balkan wars and raids; Pierre, an old Legionnaire of French nationality; and, as chief, a German from Saxony, Corporal Weidemann.

Weidemann had been in the Legion for sixteen years, and before that had served in the German Army, which he had left for

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reasons known only to himself. He was a perfect soldier, and as such despised the inexperienced volunteers. He often made bitter remarks at having been given such a raw lot of men to lead, but he worked his hardest to turn his volunteers into soldiers. Stern and scornful as he habitually was, he could be as tender as a mother over the bruises and blisters of his men, and tried hard to keep them in perfect physical condition. He frequently remarked, in very bad Legion French: 'You have good will, but you will never make good soldiers'; or, 'The Germans will win the war, but I have given my word to France, and will keep it.'

Most of the unpleasant *corvées* (tasks) fell to the lot of the Ninth Squad. First, its men were the tallest, and therefore usually the first noticed. Worse still, its corporal was heartily detested by Térésien, the sergeant in charge of the section of which the Ninth was one of the four squads, and fatigue duty was passed on to him as often as possible. Térésien was an irascible little Breton, a one-time lieutenant in the French Navy, from which he had been cashiered because of a hasty blow given a fellow officer; he had buried himself in the Legion to try to regain his rank.

Térésien was cordially hated by Pasqualaggi, the *adjutant* of the company composed of his section and three others, and Pasqualaggi put all the *corvées* possible on to Térésien and his section. In the French Army, the *adjutant* is the highest ranking non-commissioned officer, and usually takes the orders from the company captain and passes them on to the sergeants. He can make things very uncomfortable for any non-com he does not happen to like. Pasqualaggi was a Corsican; Legion gossip had it that he was formerly a shepherd who had killed an enemy in a duel with knives, and afterwards had fled to the Legion to escape the vendetta sworn by his victim's family.

So, the order passed on down from one non-com to another, it fell to the lot of the Ninth Squad to act as *garde de convoi* on



REIMS CATHEDRAL STRUCK BY A SHELL



THE OLD WINDMILL NEAR VERZENAY

Spared by the shells, which fell all around it

Up to the Front

October 26. Corporal Weidemann lined up his men at the edge of Verzenay at four-thirty in the morning. Something was wrong with the kitchen supplies, and no rations were issued except a half-cup of almost-cold, strong, black coffee per man. Then the grumbling squad fell in behind the long line of wagons and carts, and set out along the vineyard-lined highway. Just outside Verzenay, the men remarked a weather-beaten, gaunt, wooden windmill, standing boldly out on the hillside looking over the lines, and wondered why so splendid an observation post had not already been destroyed by German shells, for which it was an ideal target.

Fortunately, the day was sunny, and there was plenty of color and interest along the route, which swung almost in a semicircle around Reims. Part of the doomed city was in flames, and it seemed as if the Cathedral, looming majestically over the housetops, was being struck by shells. Aeroplanes, friendly and enemy, flew overhead, and occasionally a shell screamed by. The Moroccan Division was holding the sector, and the brilliant uniforms of the Zouaves and native riflemen from Northern Africa added to the picturesqueness of the scene.

All this excitement kept fatigue away for hours, but when two o'clock in the afternoon came and no halt had been made for lunch — the squad and supply train paused every fifty minutes for the regulation ten-minute rest — the men began to complain. Grumbling was useless, however: the corporal had his orders, which were to follow the convoy. No bread had been issued; a few of the men had bits left from the previous day's ration, and munched at that.

A mule-driver started the rumor that Fismes was the destination of the regiment, and that the convoy and its guard would also rest there for the night. The march continued; at one of the hourly halts a woman brought out a pail of newly made wine, and gave the men cupfuls of it. Dusk came, and all the men of the Ninth Squad were footsore and weary. Even the

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corporal, who had scoffed at his volunteers earlier in the day, lagged silently behind with a blistered foot. Catching up with the others at a halt, he lost his detached attitude, and finally admitted that he did not know where a stop for the night would be made, but stated that he hoped to get orders at Fismes.

Fismes was reached shortly after dark. No one in the battered, troop-filled town had seen or heard anything of the Second Foreign Regiment, but finally, a dispatch-bearing cyclist appeared with orders, and the convoy and guard sullenly crossed the bridge over the Vesle in the middle of the town, and doggedly set forth up the hill toward the Aisne battlefields. By now the mules themselves could hardly walk, and their drivers were swearing as vociferously as their exhausted condition would allow. The men of the Ninth Squad were so sodden in misery that they could not complain, but staggered on automatically in a sort of daze. Every twenty minutes, ten-minute halts were made, and the men threw themselves down and slept on rock piles or anything else at hand to keep them out of the mud.

About eleven o'clock at night, a real halt was called, on a cold, soggy, wind-swept plateau, so near the lines that orders given their men by the French officers in the trenches were distinctly heard. A steady rifle and machine-gun fire was going on. Dowd, Kiffin Rockwell, and Seeger, who seemed the least-wearied men of the outfit, were called off by the corporal and posted on guard; their comrades threw themselves down and slept.

The Ninth Squad had marched fifty-six kilometres on almost empty stomachs, carrying a heavy load of rifles, cartridges, and other equipment — the longest march made by a band of Legionnaires in France during the World War.

A little after four o'clock the next morning, the convoy and guard again set forward, and a few hours later stumbled into the tiny hamlet of Cuiry-les-Chaudardes, where the rest of the regiment had been awaiting them since the previous afternoon.

The Germans were vigorously bombarding Cuiry-les-Chaudardes, but most of the shells fell short in a field just outside the village. The regiment sprawled all over the place, which seemed much too small for it. Térésien's section, including most of the American volunteers, was quartered in the loft and the out-buildings of a large farmhouse, where the men made themselves as comfortable as possible in the hay and straw. Bouligny and Stone had been put in a machine-gun company; Sweeny was the colonel's cyclist; and Van Vorst, because of his medical training, was assistant to the battalion's doctor.

A day and a night of rest, and then a morning review of the regiment by the general commanding the Thirty-Sixth Division, of which it was now a part. The Legionnaires were given an extra good and abundant *soupe*, and the afternoon was spent in cutting wood for the kitchens and in cleaning arms and equipment.

When darkness began to fall, the sections lined up in the road in front of the houses that had sheltered them, each man with his sixty-odd pounds of equipment strapped on his shoulders. As it was to be the regiment's first experience in the trenches, the sergeants and corporals of each section gave their men a few words of advice, cautioning against smoking or talking *en route* to the lines, and telling each man to make sure that his *gamelle* (canteen), *bidon* (water-bottle), bayonet, etc., were so fastened that they could not rattle or come loose. Then the Legionnaires were off, by columns of four, along a newly made military road, deeply rutted and mired by the hundreds of artillery caissons, provision and ammunition wagons, pack-mules and horses that had passed that way.

For perhaps a kilometre the way ran through sugarbeet fields, then it dipped into a wooded marsh. The trees were thick and the road chopped through was so narrow that the tree-tops in-

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terlacing overhead shut out all light, except here and there stray beams from a watery moon. The line of marching men changed to single file, and silently ploughed along through the sodden road, heavy with a recent rain.

The marching column skirted the base of a steep hill. Occasionally an illuminating shell burst high in the sky above, lighting up the scene with an unearthly and dazzling glare. But for a few seconds only, then the light died down and all was darker than ever.

A rifle was fired across the hill, then another and another. Quickly the fusillade became general; the sharp rat-rat — rat-rat of machine guns was added to the medley of sounds; a light breeze wafted over. Men were shouting loudly. The command, '*Feu à volonté!*' and a confusion of voices were heard.

The Legionnaires marched on. The firing and the shouting died down as suddenly as they had arisen, leaving only the usual night noises. The crest of a little hill was reached, and a short halt was made.

'*Sac au dos!*' and the men were off again. The road improved, and the pale moon showed a level stretch of comparatively open country. The Legionnaires filed past the half-destroyed Château du Blanc-Sablon, where Colonel Passard and his staff were lined up to watch them go by. Finally there was reached the foot of a hill, whose wood-fringed crest sheltered the trenches the regiment was making for. The hill overlooked the ruined village of Craonnelle, in and beyond which were entrenched the enemy, who constantly swept the countryside with searchlights installed on the heights above. Hidden by the hill, the Legionnaires halted, while the French line infantrymen they were to relieve crept out of their holes in the ground, slipped silently down the slope, and started toward the rear and a well-earned repose. All was done with the quiet swiftness of a pantomime.

Along barely traced, shallow communication trenches, the



LEGIONNAIRE DUGOUTS IN WOODS BEHIND CHÂTEAU BLANC-SABLON
Winter of 1914-15



AMERICAN LEGIONNAIRES IN THE TRENCHES
 NEAR CRAONNELLE, DECEMBER, 1914
Left to right: Kiffin Rockwell, Dennis Dowd, Charles Trinkard

Up to the Front

Legionnaires hurried up the hill, ranged themselves beside the rude dugouts, which alternated with the combat trenches, and crawled one by one into the cave-like entrances. The German searchlights played upon the position, a few shells whined overhead. The Legionnaires settled themselves as they could, unstrapped their packs, and placed their rifles handy.

The American volunteers and their comrades were in the trenches.

Chapter III

THE FIRST WINTER IN THE TRENCHES

TRENCH warfare was still in its infancy, and the line held by the Legionnaires had been hastily and poorly made. British troops had been there first, then French line infantrymen belonging to the Thirty-Fourth and Two Hundred and Eighteenth Regiments. The trenches and bomb-proof shelters were shallow and narrow, and the Legionnaires, worn out by their long, heavily laden hike from Cuiry-les-Chaudardes, passed a weary and cramped first night in the firing line.

The men were not long in realizing that the present war was different from anything the old Legionnaires had known in the French Colonies, and unlike what the volunteers had been taught at the training camps to expect. The German artillery kept up a steady if not intense bombardment. The very first morning in the trenches, Charles Trinkard and Paul Rockwell sat in the sunshine cleaning their rifles, while a young Belgian volunteer sat on the bank behind them, arranging the contents of his pack as he dangled his legs in the trench. Suddenly Trinkard shouted, '*Homme blessé!*' (man wounded). Rockwell looked around, but at first noticed no one injured, until he saw the little Belgian's legs stiffening. The youth had been struck in the head by a shrapnel ball or machine-gun bullet, and had toppled over without a cry.

The same day about noon, Phélizot, David King, and a veteran Spanish Legionnaire, who were occupying a small dug-out together, started to leave their shelter. The Spaniard was the first to climb out the tiny entrance; he fell back dead

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into the arms of his American comrades, shot through his heart.

The kitchens of the battalion were installed in the forest a few hundred yards downhill behind the trenches. A German aeroplane flying over the lines soon spotted them, and signalled their location back to the enemy batteries. When the *soupe corvée* went down from the trenches to fetch the evening meal, they found the place a veritable shambles. The enemy gunners had chosen the hour when the cooks were busy preparing the food to start a vigorous bombardment of the kitchens. Having the exact range, the shells fell true to their mark, and fourteen men were killed and some thirty wounded. Fred Zinn had been detailed by Weidemann as kitchen helper, and never understood how he escaped the bursting shells and shrapnel.

The men in the trenches ate cold reserve rations that evening, or nothing at all. The kitchens were moved a good two miles back into the swampy woods, which made a painful task for the *soupe corvées* — usually the Ninth Squad for its section — and gave cold food to the Legionnaires in the front lines.

The worst shelling of the day was always just at supper time, but the hail of shell fragments and shrapnel never hindered old Corporal Weidemann in his distribution of *soupe* to his men. Heedless of the bombardment, he went from dugout to dugout, ladling out the food as calmly as if he were still at the Pérignon Barracks.

The men worked steadily at improving and strengthening their position. Trenches were widened and deepened, and new lines dug, and at night logs were fetched up and piled over the shelters, then covered with earth and brush. Barbed-wire entanglements were placed in front of the trenches, and the lines consolidated right and left.

The ruins of Craonnelle lay downhill a little way in front of the Legion's trenches, and the Germans were entrenched in the village and beyond, along the Chemin des Dames and the Cra-

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onne Plateau. Hundreds of dead French, British, and German soldiers lay unburied between the lines throughout the sector, and the Americans spent hours speculating on what the region would smell like when spring brought sunshine and thaws.

Patrols and scouting parties from both armies went out between the lines nightly, and often on foggy days, and encounters were frequent. Pasqualaggi, the noisy little Corsican *adjudant*, was gravely wounded during one of the first of these brushes. He went out into a wooded part of No-Man's-Land on an unusually foggy morning, accompanied by a sergeant and a handful of men. Shots were exchanged with a German patrol, and Pasqualaggi was brought back into his lines with a bullet through his body. He was very unpopular in the Legion, and it was whispered that one of his own men had taken advantage of the encounter with the enemy to shoot him. It was impossible to verify such a rumor.

Another patrol passed at night behind the German outposts at Craonnelle, and reached the first houses of Craonne, some distance beyond. The Legionnaires were fourteen in number, including a veteran *adjudant*, and an English volunteer, Sergeant Burckley. Suddenly came the cry, '*Halt: Wer da?*' A German patrol some twenty strong was approaching. The Legionnaires halted, while one of their number, an Alsatian, called out to the enemy in German. The latter approached, and the Legionnaires sprang upon them with the naked bayonet, killing and wounding several. Burckley knocked one of them down, picked him up, and carried him prisoner into the French lines.

Sergeant Térésien was on guard at night between the lines with several men of his section. Sounds of crashing underbrush were heard: an enemy patrol was surely approaching. 'Hold your fire until we can see them,' whispered the sergeant. A tense wait, and then the enemy came into view, dimly outlined in the moonlight. '*Feu à volonté!*' shouted Térésien, and well-nourished volleys greeted the enemy, who broke and fled noisily.



WASH-DAY IN THE LEGION

Cleanliness is one of the great virtues of the Legionnaire



EDGAR JOHN BOULIGNY

*The first American citizen wounded in the World War
The American 'ace' of the Foreign Legion*

The First Winter in the Trenches

It was discovered the next morning that the 'enemy' had been a few abandoned cows, wandering between the lines. Some of them lay dead or wounded near the scene of the encounter. The Legionnaires ate fresh beef, and the trenches around were thenceforth dubbed '*Les Tranchées des Vaches*' (the Cows' Trenches).

The first casualty among the American volunteers occurred during a skirmish between patrols. Corporal Bouligny went on the night of November 15 to occupy the Craonnelle cemetery, with a small band of men. A strong German outpost was already installed around the mausoleum erected to Napoleon's soldiers who fell at the battle of Craonne in 1814, and Bouligny's squad attacked it. During the fray Bouligny was shot through the fleshy part of the knee. He remained with his men until the cemetery was captured, then went back to a dressing-post, and was sent to a hospital. His wound was fortunately a clean one, and he was back with his battalion in less than five weeks.

Charles Beaumont was wounded in the heel by a shrapnel ball during a bombardment on November 29. The wound became infected, and after months in hospital he was invalided out of the Legion.

The cold became bitter, and there was much suffering in the trenches. The battalions usually stayed four days in the front lines, six days in reserve trenches, then four days at Cuiry-les-Chaudardes. Life was pretty much the same, wherever they were, except that the food and coffee were always cold by the time they reached the front-line trenches, and casualties were greater from shell-fire back behind the lines. The men gradually adjusted themselves to the life, and invented various means of keeping themselves fairly warm and comfortable at times. They burrowed deeper and deeper into the earth, and outfitted their dugouts with varied articles picked up in demolished houses.

The mail and parcels-post service became well organized, and letters and packages were distributed daily, even in the front-

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line trenches. Much amusement was created among the Americans when one youth read a letter from his father, telling him to 'immediately resign his position with the French Army and come home.' The father was a captain in the New York Seventh Regiment, and as his son was a minor, had sent him to France with a written permission to enlist in the French Army, seemingly with the idea that he would learn French military tactics, but never be sent to the front.

Harry Collins stripped himself naked in a first-line trench one night, despite the freezing cold, grabbed his bayonet and swore he would kill any man who approached him. He then picked up his clothes and ran away into the woods.

Fred Zinn went to the battalion infirmary at Cuiry-les-Chaudardes a few days later, to get some anti-lice ointment, as the ravenous parasites were driving the volunteers mad. He discovered Collins at the infirmary; the gendarmes had caught the latter trying to escape from the War Zone, and had brought him back to his regiment. Collins pretended to be insane, and was put under doctors' observation. Collins called Zinn over to his bed and said: 'Tell the boys I'm not crazy. I've had all I want of this show, got all the glory I'm after, and I'm going to get out.'

While at Toulouse, Collins had had his photograph taken as soon as he got into uniform, and mailed copies back to various Boston newspapers with letters to the effect that 'This is the photograph of Harry Cushing Collins, the Boston boy and Harvard graduate who organized a corps of mounted American Rough-Riders, and is now leading his gallant men into action across the battlefields of the Marne.' Some of the newspapers, glad to get a good story, did not take time to verify whether or not there ever had been a Harry Cushing Collins on the rolls of Harvard College or a corps of mounted American Rough-Riders fighting in France, but printed Collins's picture and letter. Clippings of the articles reached him the very day the regiment

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first arrived at Cuiry-les-Chaudardes, and so filled him with pride that he could not resist showing them to his comrades, who thenceforth avoided him even more carefully than before.

The Legion doctors had coped with harder cases than Collins, and his feigning insanity did not deceive them. After watching him for a few days, he was sent to the disciplinary battalion in Northern Africa.

2

William Thaw had been hoping all along to be transferred to the Aviation Service of the French Army, and his desire was still further aroused when in late November the American volunteers witnessed from their trenches one of the very first aeroplane combats. A French aeroplane attacked a German biplane over the sector held by the Legion, and after a heated exchange of machine-gun fire, the German aeroplane crashed to earth near Vailly, on the river Aisne.

The Legionnaires had seen aeroplanes fly over their heads ever since their arrival at the front, had often seen them shelled by anti-aircraft batteries, and had fired upon them themselves, but this was the first time they had seen two aeroplanes fight. At the beginning of the war, aeroplanes were unarmed. Then the fliers began carrying carbines, and would exchange shots as they passed each other in the air. Now machine-guns were mounted on some of the aeroplanes. Aerial warfare was beginning.

Thaw knew Lieutenant Brocard, who commanded the *escadrille* that patrolled the air in the sector held by the Legion. Much as he hated any unnecessary exertion, the first time his company was *au repos* at Cuiry-les-Chaudardes after the French aerial victory, Thaw hiked thirty-two kilometres over to Brocard's aviation field, and pleaded with such ardor to become an aviator that, on December 24, the order came for him to leave the Legion and enter the Aviation.

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There was already one American citizen in the French Army Aviation, Gervais Raoul Lufbery, of Wallingford, Connecticut. Lufbery had marched over to the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris with the other American volunteers on August 21, but due to the efforts of his close friend, the great French airman Marc Pourpe, transferred to the Aviation the day after enlisting in the Legion, and went immediately to the front as Pourpe's aeroplane mechanic. William Thaw, however, was the first experienced American aviator to enter the French Army Aviation. Jimmie Bach and Bert Hall left the Legion about the same time as Thaw to learn to fly. When Hall first arrived at the aviation field, he claimed to be already an experienced pilot. The commander of the field ordered an aeroplane brought out of its hangar, and asked Hall to give an exhibition of his flying. Bert was determined to get out of the cold, lousy trenches, so, nothing daunted, he climbed into the machine, and headed it across the field. The aeroplane crashed into a building, and was wrecked, but Hall escaped uninjured.

'You don't know anything about flying,' commented the French commander, 'but I think you can learn.'

Thaw's chief regret on leaving the Legion was having to sacrifice his beard. All the Legionnaires had gone unshaved so long that they had all the hair on their faces that could grow there, and Thaw had a splendid beard which made him the living image of Henry VIII.

The first Christmas of the war found the American Legionnaires in the reserve trenches. Parcels arrived from Americans in Paris, containing all kinds of woollen goods, such as gloves, socks, knitted helmets, mufflers, and other things. Dr. Van Vorst received a large Virginia ham, which he presented to his comrades. The Legionnaires were supposed to spend Christmas Day exactly as they spent other days when in the reserve lines, digging new trenches and fortifying the dugouts. Most of the Americans played truant, however. They slipped off to a farm-

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house, had a peasant woman cook Van Vorst's ham, and spent the day eating, drinking coffee and rum, and talking.

Alan Seeger, ever an individualist, had a solitary Christmas, which he described in his diary:

'Spent a unique and agreeable kind of Christmas in Cuiry, brightened by thoughtful friends in Paris, who sent us all packages laden with everything good to eat and wear. Christmas Day itself was one of the most beautiful of cold winter days. Rose early and walked up to the farm over the frost-whitened hillside. Hot coffee and bread. Beauty of dawn, white landscape and steaming village. Pleasure of opening packages and reading letters in the hayloft. After morning soup, *rassemblement* and march off to work. But I played truant again and slipping off with gun slung over shoulder walked alone (not without considerable risk) to Beaurieux. The soldier to whom I had given my wash the week before had been moved to Beaurieux, and as it was absolutely necessary to have the change of clothing, I had to be so far unscrupulous. Beautiful walk through the sunny fields. Accomplished object in Beaurieux and enjoyed walking about town, buying the few little things that were to be bought and talking to soldiers of other regiments. Home at sunset. Heated plum-pudding and made hot chocolate after supper and stayed up late talking in candle-lit loft.'

3

Shortly after Christmas occurred one of the most exciting episodes in the history of the Foreign Legion during the entire World War. Kiffin Rockwell told of it in a letter to his sister:

'January 7, 1915

'*Dear Agnes:*

I have had practically no sleep for the last eighty hours, but I can't sleep now, so will write you and try to keep my mind occupied.

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'I spent the holidays fairly quietly, came out of the trenches New Year's Eve. New Year's Day we were marched ten kilometres to the rear and given the first bath the army had given us for three months. The next day we were inoculated for typhoid. The next two days our arms were a little sore and we were more or less feverish; so we got two days' rest — the first since being in the army.

'On the night of the 4th, almost midnight, we started to where I now am. This is a village that I should say probably had five thousand inhabitants before the war and it has been fought over quite a bit, the Germans having lost two thousand killed in a night attack on it in the early part of the war. There is not now a building that has not been demolished by shells.

'The march here was through swamps and it was dark and rainy, so it took us about three hours to get here. We marched quietly through the streets and my section was sent to the sector nearest the enemy, in the fine park of a beautiful château. When we got to the ruined château we relieved the section there that had been staying in the basement, it being intact. While the relief was going on, the Ninth Squad (the one I am in) was called off by the sergeant as *petit poste*. We went through the park about one hundred yards and came to a wall like those built around castles in medieval times. There were nine of us and our corporal (our number in camp was fifteen). Four of us were stationed at different points along the wall as sentries, while the others went down to the station for the *petit poste*.

'At my position a shell had blown a hole through the wall. This hole had a door, propped against it by a ladder, a small opening being left at each side, from which I could watch in the direction of the enemy. Once in a while I would crawl up the ladder and look over the wall.

'I was stationed there at about four o'clock. At seven o'clock, when it was getting light, the corporal came and told me to go back to the château for food for us, which I did. There, I met



LEGIONNAIRES STARTING TO THE TRENCHES

Note round loaf of army bread



KIFFIN AND PAUL ROCKWELL

Pérignon Barracks, Toulouse, September, 1914

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one of the other guards, and we got the food and started back with it. As we came out of the woods towards the wall, we saw that we were exposed to fire from three directions and that the German trenches were quite near the wall. About that time bullets began to "whizz" and we "ducked" and ran to the wall and then along the side of it about two hundred yards to the *petit poste*. All that day we crouched in little dugouts and cursed our officers for putting us in such a death-trap without more men and without telling us the real situation. At nightfall, we were stationed in such a way that four of us had to watch a wall practically one half mile long, right under the nose of the enemy, with hundreds of men in the rear of us subject to an attack. The *poste* was two hours on and two hours off, with no man to close his eyes, and the understanding that we would be relieved at six the next morning.

'At ten-thirty P.M., I was standing at the door mentioned above when the communication sentinel came up to me. Just as he started to speak, something fell at my feet and sputtered a little and then went out. We each said: "What's that?" I reached down and picked it up, when the other sentinel said: "Good God! It's a hand grenade!" I threw it away and we both jumped to attention, asking each other what to do, and finally decided for Seeger (the other sentry) to go to the *petit poste* for the corporal, while I watched. Just as he and the corporal came running up, the corporal called, "*Garde à vous, Rockwell*," and another grenade fell at my feet. I jumped over the ladder toward the corporal and as I reached his side the bomb exploded. We both called out "*Aux armes!*" We had no more than done this, when the door gave in and a raiding party entered the side of the opening. The corporal and I both were in an open position at their mercy, so we turned and jumped toward cover. I went about ten feet when rifles flashed and I dropped to the ground. When I dropped, the corporal fell beside me and I knew by his fall that he was dead. I crouched and

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ran, the bullets whizzing by me, but I made it to the woods. In the mean time the five men left at the *poste* jumped over to their positions. When they did, the Germans in the trenches, at the door in the wall, and others who had managed to slip over the wall at some unprotected point, opened fire on them. Two were slightly wounded and another's rifle was shattered by a bullet. They immediately dropped flat on the ground and lay there, afraid to fire, as most of the fire was coming from the direction in which they expected reënforcements, and in which they knew we sentries were. I lay in the woods and watched, not daring to move lest I be seen.

'While they had us in this position, some kept firing while others ran down to the corporal, dragged his body up toward the door, cut off his equipment and coat and took them and his gun, broke his body up with the butts of their rifles and then got away without a shot being fired on our side.

'A few minutes later a sergeant with two men came running through the woods, and Seeger (who had joined me) and I halted them, and we five advanced on the opening and put up the door. By that time reënforcements came up.

'Corporal Weidemann was a full-blooded German, but had been in the Legion for fifteen years. He was ignorant but honest, impartial and afraid of nothing. In my mind he was the best of all the old Legionnaires.

'The affair was rather a disgrace for all of us. I made mistakes in my actions due to not being well versed in all kinds of warfare. The corporal acted wrongly through ignorance and astonishment. The whole thing impressed all of us more like a murder than warfare. The Germans had no military point to gain by doing what they did. It was done as an act of individualism with a desire to kill. The top of poor Weidemann's head was knocked off, after he was killed, by the butt of a rifle.

'After the reënforcements came up, they scattered in search

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of Germans while I resumed my post with the corporal's body beside me. In about fifteen minutes the stretcher-bearers came and got it, and I called the acting chief of the squad and told him he would have to relieve me, as my nerves had gone all to pieces. He did this and I went back to the château to make a report on how it all happened.

'After about half an hour, I came back to my post and was on guard practically all the rest of the night.

'About two hours after all this happened, there came from the German trenches the most diabolical yell of derision I ever heard. It was mocking Weidemann's last words, his call "*Aux armes!*" and it almost froze the blood to hear it. Up until that moment I had never felt a real desire to kill a German. Since then I have had nothing but murder in my heart, and now no matter what happens I am going through this war as long as I can.'

That yell from the German trenches made an undying impression on every man who heard it. Alan Seeger wrote:

'About midnight, from far up on the hillside, a diabolical cry came down, more like an animal's than a man's, a blood-curdling yell of mockery and exultation.

'In that cry all the evolution of centuries was levelled. I seemed to hear the yell of the warrior of the Stone Age over his fallen enemy. It was one of those antidotes to civilization of which this war can offer so many to the searcher after extraordinary sensations.'

Capdevielle's neck was grazed by a bullet, another passed between two of Zinn's fingers, and Buchanan's rifle was ruined, but the Ninth Squad stayed in the park of the château of Crannelle four more days. Weidemann was succeeded as corporal of the squad by a Boer, who had been for almost ten years in the Legion. He had fought the English throughout the Boer War, and his father, brothers, and sisters were killed in it. His second

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five years' term of enlistment in the Legion expired in March, 1915, and he left the corps with the intention of returning to South Africa to fight against the English there.

4

Edward Mandell Stone was on guard February 17 with his machine-gun section, at an exposed point in the sector held by his battalion, to the left of Craonnelle. The Germans suddenly started an intense bombardment. Fearing that it was preparatory to a surprise attack, Stone stood by his piece, instead of taking shelter in a dugout, and a few minutes later fell mortally wounded.

Van Vorst, who was on duty that day at the advanced dressing-post, wrote a relative the following letter about the first mortality among the American Legionnaires:

'I saw Eddie Stone frequently during the six months we were together in Battalion C, Second Regiment of Foreign Legion. He was always on the job, and in good spirits. He had a lot of grit, poor chap. One day I got a call from his company to treat a wounded man. I found Stone with a hole made by a shrapnel ball in his side, probably left lung penetrated. There was no wound of exit, so the ball, or piece of shell, stayed in. He was carried back by my squad of stretcher-bearers from the first-line trench, where I applied the first dressing, to "Blanc Sablon," our headquarters, and from there was removed to a hospital about eight miles back. I did not see him any more, but heard that he died of his wound in this hospital. I think he is buried near Revillion, a very small village about eight miles from Fismes, probably in or near the hospital grounds. He had some friends in the Legion who spoke highly of him to me. There was very little help we regimental doctors could do for the wounded, I am sorry to say. All we could do for them was to see they were carefully moved back out of the firing zone after a first dressing.



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You can tell his people he always did his duty as a soldier, and died like one; of this I am sure.'

Stone died in the hospital at Romilly-sur-Seine on February 27, and was buried in the near-by cemetery. He was the first American citizen to be killed during the World War. Born in Chicago, Illinois, on January 8, 1888, his preliminary education was received at Milton Academy, Milton, Massachusetts. He entered Harvard College in 1904 and took his A.B. degree in three years, with the class of 1907. After two years in the Harvard Law School, Stone entered the United States Diplomatic Service, and went to Buenos Aires, Argentina, as secretary to the United States Minister there, the Honorable Charles H. Sherrill. He was living in Paris when the war broke out.

In the Legion, Stone was one of the quietest, hardest-working, and most unassuming soldiers, ever ready to propose himself for any post where coolness and fearlessness were especially required. The other American volunteers saw little of him after the regiment arrived at the front, as he was the only American in his machine-gun section.

Edward Mandell Stone was posthumously cited in the Order of the Army as 'a brave Legionnaire, who died for France on February 27, 1915, as a result of his glorious wounds received before Craonne.'

Stone's letters to an uncle, Frederic M. Stone, tell something of his life in the Legion:

'MAILLY, *October 9, 1914*

'We are now at an enormous military camp at a place called Mailly, about twenty miles from Châlons. We are working very hard going through exercises of all sorts, as I am glad to say that the French Government has no intention of sending us to the firing line without thorough preliminary training. As a matter of fact, we are not far from the front, and are well within hearing

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of the artillery. The Germans have been here, and a part of the battle of the Marne was fought in this neighborhood. There are relics of the battle of all sorts: soldiers' graves, German and French rifles and uniforms, pieces of shells, etc. Some of the villages around here have been almost totally destroyed.

'You will be glad to hear that I am perfectly well and that the life up to the present has been doing me good rather than harm.'

Another letter, dated January 20, 1915, said:

'I think it is time I gave a more detailed account of myself than I have done up to the present time. The censorship has somewhat relaxed, so I do not think there can be any danger of my letter being interfered with. As I wrote several times to Uncle Nat, we have been in this neighborhood, that is to say in the region of Craonne, for nearly three months. There has been very little action here since we arrived, and practically no ground lost or gained. This does not mean that we have had an easy time, for we have been under fire more or less continually. The weather has been very trying, as there has been an enormous amount of rain and we are all more or less tired out. Within the last week there have been unfavorable developments near Soissons, and it looks as if we should have to retreat, especially as the Aisne is in flood and many of the bridges impracticable. If there is a battle of any importance, we probably shall not take part in it, as we are in no condition to go through an action lasting several days. We shall in all probability go ingloriously to the rear, giving place to fresh troops.

'To go into more detail concerning myself, I have been able to keep well up to the present time. We are well fed, and all mail arrives regularly, although of course more or less delayed. I have so far kept out of all trouble and get on well with officers and men in the regiment. I am not, however, on the road to promotion, although several of my friends are already corporals

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and one a sergeant. I can think of nothing else except that I have been inoculated against typhoid fever.'

The 'Harvard Graduates' Magazine,' speaking of Stone's death, said:

A recent account received from the front states that 'Dr. Van Vorst, who attended him, asked if he wished to have him write to any one, but Stone said it was not worth while.' These words were, in a way, characteristic of the man — what he did, he did well, and invariably felt that no particular attention should be paid to the results he achieved. He was an essentially modest person who took life as he found it, and contributed to everything he took part in both with high ideals and straightforward work.

The 'Harvard Crimson' said, in the number of March 28, 1915:

The papers report that Edward Mandell Stone, '08, who last August enlisted in the Foreign Legion of France, has died. His classmates, his friends, even those who knew him only enough to say a merry hello to him as he passed them in the Yard a few short years ago, will feel deep regret for the loss of a man whom they liked and respected, and a deep sympathy for his bereaved family. But in a more general sense, this is a particularly significant loss, for Stone was, I believe, the first Harvard man to lose his life in the war. We do much talking around the Yard about the war, taking sides (usually the same side) with earnest eloquence; but here is a fellow, happy, rich, strong, with a promising life before him, who did not hesitate to volunteer under a foreign banner and sacrifice his life for the cause he thought (and most of us think) right. Let undergraduates and professors and alumni take off their hats in reverent memory of their brother who by dying for his ideals has brought honor upon himself and upon the University he so nobly represented.

5

There had been misunderstandings and more or less ill-feeling between the veteran Legionnaires and the volunteers for the war's duration ever since the two groups were thrown together

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in the training-camps, and conditions under which all the men lived at the front had done little to help the situation. Cold and wet and tired, every man was apt to be chronically ill-tempered and quarrelsome, and it was usually a case of each man for himself and his particular group of friends.

Some of the volunteers had protested openly when they were first put in with the old Legionnaires from Africa, alleging that they were a lot of outcasts from society and fugitives from justice — the very outcry raised before the war by the Germans, and furthered by thoughtless writers of romance. No accusation could be more unjust to the veterans, who, like the volunteers, were drawn from all classes of society. Some, authentic descendants of the Lansquenets of other days, had a passion for the soldier's calling which could be satisfied only by service in an active corps like the Foreign Legion; some were lured by the mirage of adventure in exotic lands. Others, of an independent or irregular nature, had revolted against civilization, or been unable to earn a living under ordinary conditions in civilized countries. Many were natives of Alsace-Lorraine who resented German domination over their country, and could not serve France elsewhere than in the Legion. A few, by far the smallest class, came to the Legion because of disappointment in love or to forget the past or allow it to be forgotten.

The veterans, feeling that they were looked down upon as mercenary soldiers by the volunteers, despised the latter as ill-trained novices, and often taunted them with their lack of hardiness and *métier*. Old Weidemann frequently told his men that they had enlisted only *pour la gamelle* (for the food), and that there was not a man amongst them who would not gladly sell his rifle for a pot of jam. Other veteran corporals and non-coms frequently made similar remarks: the volunteer privates could not answer back the *gradés* (corporals and sergeants), but were ever ready to resent anything derogatory coming from a veteran private.

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Early in March, Battalion C was behind the lines at Cuiry-les-Chaudardes. Phélizot and some of the Americans sat in a courtyard drinking coffee, when there appeared two veteran Legionnaires belonging to the machine-gun company, old soldiers so bronzed by years of hot African sunshine and cold desert winds that their race and nationality could only be guessed at. These men began making scathing comments on the volunteers and about the Americans in particular. Each proclaimed that he could beat single-handed and in fair fight any seven of the Americans.

Phélizot immediately offered to fight both men; his offer was as quickly accepted, and the scrap began. It started off well for the American, who was a good boxer; he knocked down one adversary, and was severely punishing the other, when a third old Legionnaire, a chum of the first two, arrived. Seeing that things were going badly for his comrades, he swung his large *bidon* (water-bottle), heavy with two litres of wine, and struck Phélizot a crashing blow on the head. The latter fell unconscious; the other Americans and more veterans of the machine-gun section joined the fray, and only the arrival of a captain and several non-coms prevented blood from flowing freely.

Phélizot was carried into a room and revived, but he suffered all night with an intense pain in his head. The following morning at sick-call he reported ill, went to the infirmary and was examined by the battalion doctor. The doctor looked him over, said there was nothing wrong, and refused to exempt him from service.

Phélizot marched back to the trenches that night with his company. Invariably of a cheerful, uncomplaining nature, and used to hardships from his years in the African jungles, he tried to remain with his comrades, but the pain in his head increased, and finally on the second morning in the firing line his sergeant ordered him back to the infirmary.

Phélizot must have suffered intense agony, but he made the

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long trip back to Cuiry alone and afoot, and again presented himself at the infirmary. For the second time the doctor looked him over, then callously and suspiciously declared: 'There is nothing wrong with you. You only want to be sent back to the rear. Get on up to the front line again!'

Phélizot stumbled out of the infirmary and started up the road leading to Château Blanc Sablon and the trenches.

Somewhat later in the day, Captain de la Villéon, commander of Phélizot's company, rode by. He saw a man lying by the roadside, but he thought it was only a weary soldier taking a rest, and passed on. Riding back an hour later, he noticed the same man lying in the same place, and called to him. There was no answer, so the captain, ever thoughtful of the welfare and condition of his men, dismounted to see what was wrong. He bent over the man and called to him again: the answer was a low groan. De la Villéon hastily turned the soldier over; it was Phélizot, already partly paralyzed and with lockjaw setting in.

An ambulance was hastily called, and Phélizot was rushed to the nearest base hospital, seventeen kilometres away at Fismes. There everything possible was done to save him, but it was too late. The skull was fractured, and badly infected with tetanus.

At the close of day on March 15, Phélizot, who had lain for hours unconscious, slowly raised himself in his cot, unwound the American flag from around his waist where it had been since the American volunteers left Camp de Mailly, cried out, 'I am an American!' and fell back dead.

Phélizot was buried in the cemetery at Fismes. Like Stone, he was born in Chicago, Illinois. He ran away from home at the age of thirteen, and worked as cabin-boy on a Mississippi River passenger boat for a time, then at the age of fifteen worked his way across the Atlantic on a freight steamer.

Returning to Chicago, he remained there for a while, and joined the Illinois Naval Reserve. He was afflicted with an in-

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curable wanderlust, however, and before long was again away seeking adventure. He hunted elephants for their ivory tusks in Africa for over ten years, became one of the best-known big-game killers on the Dark Continent, and accumulated a comfortable fortune. He was in Paris on a pleasure trip when war was declared.

Phélizot was one of the most beloved volunteers in the Legion, and one of the most helpful and generous. At Christmas time he sent from the trenches four hundred dollars toward a fund to buy gifts for poor Paris children. On the march he was ever ready to help weaker comrades by carrying their rifles or packs.

When news of Phélizot's death reached the front, there was a pitched battle between the Americans and the veterans of the machine-gun section. Chatkoff knocked down the man who struck the fatal blow, and was literally kicking him to death, when a military guard appeared, separated all the combatants, and placed both sections under arrest. Phélizot's slayer disappeared from the Legion; it was said that he had been sentenced to the penitentiary regiment in Africa. The brutal doctor did not stay much longer with the Legion, either. So many complaints were made against him that he was sent away.

6

By the end of the first winter of the war, the ranks of the Second Marching Regiment of the Legion were sadly depleted. Deaths, wounds, and illness had taken a heavy toll among the men who so gayly left Toulouse the previous September. The First Company of Battalion C, in which were most of the Americans, was reduced to about one third its normal strength. There were only six men left in the Ninth Squad: Capdevielle, Dowd, Kiffin Rockwell, Seeger, von Krogh, and Nilson, who had spent most of the winter in hospital. Since the veteran Boer left the

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Legion, there had been no corporal for the squad, Capdevielle and Kiffin Rockwell acting in that capacity.

The English volunteers left on February 1 to join their national Army; young Bertrand Towle declared he was a British subject and left with them. When he reached England, he appealed to the American Ambassador in London, obtained his discharge from the British Army, and returned to America.

Soubiran passed the early winter behind the lines; the wheat abandoned in the war zone by the peasants was harvested by the French Army and, because of his mechanical skill, Soubiran was assigned to run a threshing-machine. Beaumont, Carstairs, Casey, Delpeuch, Ganson, Olinger, Percy, Paul Rockwell, and Fred Zinn were scattered about France in military hospitals. Theodore Haas was sent to hospital early in April, and thirty-two bits of shrapnel were picked out of his body by surgeons.

After long stays in hospital, Carstairs, Ganson, Olinger, and Paul Rockwell were invalided out of the Legion. Carstairs and Olinger returned to the United States; Paul Rockwell remained in France to be near his brother, and engaged in French propaganda work.

Rupert Van Vorst obtained a leave of absence to go to America, because of the grave illness of one of his children, and the French Embassy at Washington liberated him from further service with the Foreign Legion.

Reënforcements arrived from the *dépôts* at Toulouse and Orléans, among them three splendid Americans, Guy H. Agostini, of San Francisco, California; John Bowe, of Canby, Minnesota; and Wilfred Michaud, of Detroit, Michigan. Agostini was visiting in Tarragona, Spain, where his brother was United States Consular Agent, when war broke out, and went to Marseille to enlist under the French colors. John Bowe was much older than the other volunteers. He was for years an evangelist, but, as he was of fighting blood, enlisted in the Thirteenth

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Minnesota Regiment during the Spanish-American War, took part in the capture of Manila, and fought throughout the Philippine Insurrection, where he won a Congressional Medal. Returning home, he wrote the history of his regiment, and when the World War started, was Mayor of Canby, Minnesota, and owner of a prosperous wholesale country produce commission business. He resigned his post as mayor, liquidated his business, said farewell to his wife and children — one of them was studying to be a missionary — and hastened to France to join the Foreign Legion. Michaud was born at Champion, Michigan, of French-Canadian parentage.

Bouligny, Morlae, and Sweeny were made sergeants during the winter, and Morlae was put in charge of the section in which were most of the Americans. Strong, wiry, and accustomed to hardships and army life, Morlae stood up well under the sufferings of trench warfare. Jealous, aggressive, and ill-natured, he was disliked by his American comrades, and he hated them in return; he did all he could to make life miserable for them, and inflicted punishments at the slightest excuse.

Because Casey set fire accidentally to some straw in a trench one night, Morlae denounced him as a spy, and claimed Casey was signalling to the Germans. He saw spies everywhere: Seeger was of a solitary nature, often wandering off alone, and Morlae accused him to the Legion officers of communicating with the enemy. He succeeded in getting Olinger arrested as a spy; the latter was court-martialled, but had no difficulty in proving his innocence.

Zinn was worn out and ill for some weeks, before he consented to go to the hospital. He would fall asleep while on guard and snore loudly; Morlae had him arrested several times and prison sentences were inflicted; the other Americans finally interested Commandant de Gallé, commander of Battalion C, in Zinn, and he was sent to a hospital.

Kiffin Rockwell wrote his brother Paul:

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‘If you can get me transferred to a regular French regiment or to the *Premier Étranger*, get busy at once. Morlae just came back, after studying in a corporals’ school. He is now the sergeant in charge of this section and a bigger son-of-a-bitch than ever. He takes every opportunity to insult the Americans in front of superior officers, so as to try and curry favor with them. He and I are always at swords’ points and I have told him that some day we may both be back in America. The first thing I shall do, when we are back there, is to beat hell out of him. None of us has any use for him. But you know how it is in the French Army. A sergeant has it over a private. I have even been thinking of changing my company because I might really lose my temper some time and kill the blackguard, and you know what that would mean for me. I want you to keep this letter in regard to Morlae, and if by chance I do not get back to the United States, and he tries to get a lot of cheap notoriety over there, like he is after, this is what the Americans think of him.’

Chapter IV

FIRST ATTACKS

NOT all the Americans who enlisted in August, 1914, were in the group sent to the Second Foreign Regiment. Kenneth Weeks, of Boston, Massachusetts, a former student of architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the École des Beaux Arts, Paris, and a brilliant young author, enrolled on August 21, and was assigned to Battalion C of the Second Marching Regiment of the First Foreign Regiment, whose training camp was at Bayonne. Weeks, who had made France his home for several years, had written his mother from Paris on June 30:

‘As you know by this time, there is an alarming situation here. I wrote that I was visiting a friend; he was called to his regiment to-day. Every soldier *en congé* has been likewise recalled and several regiments have been mobilized. The railways are crowded by troops. It is a question of nothing, nothing but war. Russia is in arms. The English fleet is ready. Here there is tumult; it seems as if war were inevitable, and, of course, in that case I will engage at once. In a few days I will know and will inform you. The situation may calm itself; if not, I join the army as soon as possible.’

He wrote again on August 12:

‘I have not been able to engage as soon as I hoped, but in a few days I leave for the Foreign Legion for the duration of the war.... Paris is wonderfully calm, as is all France. Naturally, perfect confidence exists and, God be praised, the barbarians will be crushed flat. You can imagine my joy in spite of the horror of such a war, but it was inevitable and is wise. I dare

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not think of my friends. All I pray is I may put as many Prussians out of the way as possible.'

Weeks was joined at Bayonne by John A. Cordonnier, of New York, who had crossed the Atlantic to enlist against the Germans. As at Toulouse, the volunteers at Bayonne were mixed in with veteran Legionnaires from Morocco, and a strenuous period of training was undergone. As an experiment, many of the volunteers in the battalion were grouped by nationalities: the Czechs, Poles, and Greeks formed separate companies which for political reasons were allowed to carry their national colors. Cordonnier was put with the Poles, while Weeks was in a company composed largely of Italians. With him was another young writer, the Russian Zinovi Pechkoff, an adopted son of Maxime Gorky; Pechkoff at one time had lived in America, and was residing in Italy in August, 1914. He took the first train from Rome to Paris, after the declaration of war, and enlisted in the Legion, to the great annoyance of his adopted father.

The Bayonne battalion was not long in getting ready for service at the front, and after a short stay at the Camp de Mailly, went into the trenches at the base of Reims Mountain, a few kilometres southwest of Reims, on October 26, along with the rest of the *Premier Étranger*, as the regiment is usually called. The regiment was well officered, and its men full of spirit and determination, and was not slow in making its sector a veritable labyrinth of deep trenches, *boyaux*, underground tunnels, and shell-proof dugouts. In December it attacked the Germans north of Prunay, drove them back, and advanced its lines over fifteen hundred metres (more than a mile). On March 1 it repulsed two violent enemy attacks around the Fort de la Pompelle. A war between outposts and patrols went on night and day. The regiment formed part of the famous Moroccan Division, the terror of the Germans because of the ferocity of its native Colonial troops and the dashing courage of its Zouaves, the pride of the French Army.

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The first officer of the regiment killed, and the first one of the Legion to fall in the World War, was Lieutenant Max Doumic, brother of René Doumic, of the Académie Française. Fifty-two years old, and therefore free from all military obligations, Lieutenant Doumic volunteered the day war was declared, and was sent to Bayonne to help train the Legion battalion there. He led his men up to the front, and was killed a few days later, in early November, while on guard in the Zouave Wood, near Reims. His Legionnaires, who admired him greatly, erected over his grave a monument, bearing the simple inscription: '*À notre Lieutenant bien aimé.*' ('To our well-loved Lieutenant.')

All the *dépôts* of the *Premier Étranger* were concentrated at Lyon late in October, and here arrived during the fall and winter several unusually fine American youths, including Harmon Dunn Hall, of St. Paul, Minnesota, and Chicago, Illinois; John Smith, of Wooster, Ohio; Nelson Larsen, of Buffalo, New York; Paul Pavelka, of Madison, Connecticut; Frank Musgrave, of San Antonio, Texas; Russell Kelly, of New York; Lawrence Scanlan, of Cedarhurst, Long Island; and Jack Janz, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Every one of these boys worked his way across the ocean on transports loaded with horses, sailing from various ports in Canada or the United States, and enlisted at Bordeaux or at La Rochelle. Kelly and Scanlan, who were chums since babyhood, came on the same boat, and Kelly's account of the trip across, written home to his father, is characteristic of all the crossings:

'BORDEAUX, *Wednesday, November 25, 1914*

'On Election Day, Tuesday, November 3rd, 1914, we left New York, from the South Brooklyn Basin, on the good ship Orcadian with a cargo of six hundred and fifty horses for the use of the French Army. There were twenty-five men, including my chum Larney and myself, who had not previously worked on ships nor around horses, and eight experienced horsemen. We

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twenty-five consisted of twelve Englishmen, seven Italians, two Greeks, one Spaniard, and three Americans, the third being a Negro. The first day the ship was out, the English and Italians started to fight, and this divided the party into two messes; at each meal thereafter there were hostilities. The third day out we ran into very rough weather, which continued during the following day: the vessel rolled and pitched in a horrible fashion, and most of us suffered severely from seasickness.

'The food furnished to us was very poor. The first nine meals consisted of Irish stew, and I believe it was made on the first day and thereafter heated at meal time.

'We went *en masse* to the chief steward and demanded better food; there was a change, but it was no better — it was only different.

'The horses were fed twice a day, the first time in the morning from half-past five to eight o'clock. We then had breakfast followed by hoisting feed from the hold, cleaning the stalls and similar duties, and then dinner. At three in the afternoon we gave the horses their second feeding, which took until nearly six o'clock, when we had supper.

'In rough weather life on the boat was fierce. Watering the horses as the boat rolled usually resulted in much of the water getting on the men, and the deck was always wet and slippery.

'A cabin meant to hold twelve seamen held thirty-three cattlemen, so conditions can be realized. The air was foul; in fact the whole ship was foul. During the last week I slept in the lowest deck on the hay. We could not eat the food furnished, and even had it been palatable, it lacked quantity, so my appetite was not appeased once during the trip. I lost about fifteen pounds during the voyage. I could wash only twice and shave once during the trip. English warships convoyed us for the entire voyage, yet there was much uneasiness among the men. We lost eighteen horses *en route*.

'On November 19th we were in that part of the Atlantic called

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the Bay of Biscay, and entering the broad Gironde River proceeded up it for about thirty miles to Pauillac, off which we lay two days, and then went up the river another thirty miles to Bordeaux, where we docked at seven in the morning of Saturday, November 21st. It was snowing and the city did not seem real — it looked so quaint and picturesque.

‘At ten o’clock we were dressed and went ashore and were stopped on the wharf by a customs official who looked in only one valise and that was for tobacco and matches. The party then proceeded to a wine-shop, where some bought wine, that they said was good, for fifteen centimes a glass.

‘We left our hand baggage at this shop and went to the British Consul, from whom we obtained our discharge. We then returned for the bags and sought lodgings, which we obtained on Rue Notre Dame.

‘On Sunday, Larney and I with the two Greeks from the ship went around town, one of the Greeks being the only member who could speak French.

‘Monday morning the four of us found the station for recruiting for the Army and made application to join the Foreign Legion. The Officers were agreeable, but evinced no desire to urge us to enlist, and they informed us of an old rule in the Legion, that an applicant will not be examined or accepted until the day following his application. So we returned Tuesday morning at eight o’clock and took the physical examination, which was very thorough, and the four of us were accepted.

‘Twenty other men who meant to join the Regular Army were examined at the same time, six of whom were rejected, some solely on account of poor teeth.

‘At five o’clock on the afternoon of Tuesday, November 24, 1914, we signed articles which made us soldiers in the Army of France, in the division *la Légion étrangère*, for service during the war.

‘We were not asked to take any oath of allegiance to France,

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nor to renounce our allegiance to the United States; all that was required of us was to be over eighteen years of age and to pass the doctor.

'We were given five francs (one dollar) as spending money, and a railroad ticket to Lyon, where one of the *dépôts* of the Foreign Legion is located. It is to be our training station for four or five months, they say, before we can go to the front. No escort was furnished or effort made to see that we reported at Lyon and we learned it was the custom even before the war to trust recruits for the Legion to reach the *dépôt* of their own accord.'

Hall came originally from St. Paul, Minnesota, but was an automobile salesman in Chicago for several years prior to the war. Smith was a charter member of the 'Adventurers' Club,' and had sought for gold in Alaska, fought in Mexican and Chilean revolutions, served in the United States Army at home and in the Philippines, among other experiences. Musgrave was a graduate of Tulane University, at New Orleans, and practised law in San Antonio until the war called him abroad. Janz, Larsen, and Pavelka were sailors, and knew most of the ports of the world. Scanlan and Kelly were very young; Scanlan had been studying electrical engineering, and Kelly a cadet at the Virginia Military Institute.

Paul Pavelka was one of the most interesting American volunteers in the entire Foreign Legion. He left home at the age of fourteen, because of differences with his stepmother (his own mother died when he was little), and had worked at many callings. He had been cook in a sheep-camp in the West, a cowboy, an assistant nurse in a San Francisco hospital. Then he had taken to the sea, and sailed on all the oceans. With a small band of comrades, he once walked across South America, and some of his companions died during the hard climb over the Andes. He had been in Australia and the South Sea Isles, and had touched at many European ports. He was living at a sailors'

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home in New York when the World War started, and joined with a recruiter who took men to a Canadian port for a ship which carried a load of horses over to the British Army. When he arrived in England, Pavelka first joined one of the strangest corps ever organized during any war: the 'Army' of the South American 'Republic' of Counani, with which he came to France in November, 1914, and enlisted in the Foreign Legion at La Rochelle.

There was also at the Lyon *dépôt* of the *Premier Étranger* in the late fall of 1914 and for a number of months in 1915 one Peter Sanford Mallon, M.D., of Greystone Park, New Jersey, who, according to his own story, was for many years a physician attached to the New Jersey State Insane Asylum. Mallon came to France after the outbreak of the war and first tried to get into the French Red Cross. Failing in this, he enlisted in the Foreign Legion as a private soldier, and drilled for a time at Lyon. He never went to the front, but did light work around the barracks and the regimental infirmary, until he was discharged from the Legion toward the end of 1915.

Smith, Larsen, Pavelka, Musgrave, Kelly, Scanlan, and Janz were sent to the front with detachments of reënforcements at different periods in February and March, 1915, and most of them were put into the same squad. Russell Kelly wrote from Verzenay, under date of April 9, 1915: 'We were scheduled to leave town one night for the third line of defense, and had our packs made up, when in came a fellow who wanted to see the Americans. He was an American from the Second *Régiment Étranger*, and had been transferred at his own request, and as the authorities are following a plan of segregation by nations, he was sent to our squad. I was agreeably surprised to learn that he had been at Virginia Military Institute; he is Kiffin Y. Rockwell. His arrival brought our number up to six.'

1 The American Squad of the *Premier Étranger* was in Company 2, Battalion B, and was led by a gigantic Moor, Corporal Didier,

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a veteran with many years' service in the Legion; its members were Russell Kelly, Paul Pavelka, Kiffin Rockwell, Lawrence Scanlan, John Smith, Kenneth Weeks; Neamorin, an Indian Oxford graduate from Calcutta; Zannis, a Constantinople Greek; Jury and Godin, two veteran Legionnaires; two Belgians, who had also served in Morocco; and three Italian volunteers. Pechkoff had been a member of the squad, but was named corporal and sent to Battalion D, where he found himself with Jack Cordonnier and Nelson Larsen. Jack Janz and Frank Musgrave were together in Battalion A.

The trenches held by the regiment and the rest of the Moroccan Division were so laid out that the sector was almost like an underground city: they were eight feet deep, three feet wide, and wound about in every direction, so that one could walk for hours without retracing the same route. They all led into a front combat trench, which was especially well made, with loopholes every two feet, and little places to stand in when shooting. By working day and night, the Legionnaires had made their position one of the strongest along the entire front.

There were continuous losses from enemy shell-fire and bullets. Corporal Laurençot, an American citizen of French origin, was on guard at dawn one April morning with his squad at an advanced listening-post. A German bullet glanced off the steel plate with which the post was roofed, and Laurençot fell mortally wounded with a huge hole torn through his head. He was one of the most popular men in Battalion D, and had just been proposed for a sergeant's stripes. Colonel Pein, commander of the Legion Brigade, showed Laurençot the signal honor of having his squad descend from the trenches for the funeral.

The celebrated Russian sculptor Mikailoff, a forty-year-old volunteer, was pulverized by an exploding shell, as he passed along a *boyau* to fetch the *soupe* for his squad.

There were moments of diversion as well for the Legionnaires.

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The Germans were heavily bombarding a wood in which was hidden a French battery. Numerous rabbits, frightened by the exploding shells, ran out into the open plain. An Italian volunteer, Furlotti, heedless of orders and shrapnel, crawled out of his trench and knocked over with a club a dozen rabbits. Wriggling back to the trench with his booty, he selected the four finest rabbits, and offered them to his company commander, Captain Junod.

To Furlotti's surprise, Captain Junod gave him four days' prison for needlessly risking his life.

'Then you wish me to take away the rabbits, my captain?' murmured the Italian. 'You will not do poor Furlotti the honor of accepting them, after he exposed his life to kill them, and is going to prison for the first time!'

'Leave the rabbits here, and get away,' laughed the captain.

'That means Furlotti will not be locked up,' said the Italian, loud enough for the captain to hear him. Nothing more was ever said about the punishment.

Late in April the four battalions of the *Premier Étranger* were pulled out of the trenches, and told that they were being moved to take part in a great attack against the Germans, just where was not known. There was great joy at the news, as every one was tired of the routine of trench life, and anxious to see vigorous action. The rejoicing was increased by the premature announcement of the entry of Italy into the war on the Allied side. A general celebration ensued, led by the Italians, which ended by numerous free-for-all fights. Prison sentences were freely handed out by the officers, but were never inflicted, for the following morning, April 25, the regiment was loaded onto trains of box cars and taken north.

By the time the Legionnaires arrived at the village of Bethonsart, north of Arras, they were well aware that the biggest

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battle since the beginning of trench warfare was in preparation. Around the railway station where they detrained were huge, newly constructed barracks to serve as evacuation hospitals for the wounded. Trainload after trainload of troops were arriving: French, British, and Belgian. Among others, there was a fresh Belgian battery, with French cannon, English harness, and Canadian horses. Endless lines of infantry and artillery stretched out across the slightly rolling plain, all headed toward the same point.

The region was poor and entirely abandoned by its civilian population. The fields were uncultivated, and the roofs of the houses, even far behind the lines, were falling in. War was *felt* here, more intensely than in the smiling Champagne country.

The Legionnaires camped in the open air under tents for three hot, sultry days, around Bethonsart; then with the rest of the Moroccan Division they moved up and spent six days in reserve just behind the firing line. Then they went into the trenches; poorly made, shallow affairs, with no bombproof shelters, which caused the men to exclaim, 'Where are our beautiful trenches of Champagne?' It began to rain, and they made acquaintance with the terrible sticky red mud of Artois.

The listening-posts were only twenty-five yards from the enemy trenches. In one of them lay at night six Legionnaires, a corporal, two Spaniards, and three Russians. They heard some one calling in German: 'Eh, comrades, German comrades!' They started to fire, but a Russian who spoke German replied: 'Who are you? What do you want?' The unknown person answered: 'I am a spy. I have at last been able to desert; I have information.' The Russian answered back: 'You are in front of the German trenches. Advance without fear, comrade.' The spy jumped into the listening-post; immediately six bayonets nailed him to the earth.

All along the French sector, men were busy with pick and shovel, digging mines, and making parallels for the attack. By

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night they crawled out between the lines, and while some kept up an incessant rifle fire, others worked, every man hugging as best he could the terrain, which was continually swept by German machine-gun fire.

The Legion's dressing-post was installed at Berthonval Farm; the Germans had been there, and knew its every nook and corner, and constantly fired upon it. Underground were miles of caverns made by quarrying stone, but they were unsafe and forbidden to the men: huge pieces of stone fell down while shells exploded on the ground above.

Two men arrived at the post, leading a Spanish volunteer, Taras. He had been shot through the jaws and chest while on listening-post. Fixing his bayonet, he had wanted to rush out and charge the Germans single-handed, but his comrades dragged him back to the dressing-post.

Unable to speak, Taras grabbed a pencil and wrote: 'I want to make the attack.' In order to get him to allow his wounds to be bandaged, the doctors were obliged to tell him that the attack was postponed, and that it was useless for him to return to the trenches. The bandages placed, the Spaniard waved aside the stretcher-bearers, and started off alone toward the village of Acque, where he was told his company was going for repose. He never reached there, but fell dead by the wayside.

Every one was raging for the attack to begin. The Legionnaires shaved off their beards, which had been allowed to grow all winter and spring. Kiffin Rockwell sacrificed a splendid growth, which had made him known throughout two regiments of the Legion as '*Le grand avec la barbe*' (the tall fellow with the beard). Packs were lightened, and everything not absolutely essential thrown away. Men ran about gathering up all the extra cartridges and grenades they could find. Among the most exalted was a Russian, Nicolas Kordochenko, who weighted himself down with grenades he begged, borrowed, and stole! During the war between Russia and Japan, Kordochenko was

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cook for Admiral Makaroff aboard the latter's flagship. The battleship was torpedoed, and the cook was one of the only three men saved. In August, 1914, he was chef in Paris for a Russian prince, and at once enlisted in the Legion, where his culinary talents were greatly appreciated by his comrades.

The night before the attack, Ladislas Szynski, son of the famous Polish historian, was killed as he took down from the parapet of a trench a Polish flag he had placed there to incite Poles serving in the enemy ranks to desert.

Everything was in readiness for the attack. Colonel Pein said: 'My men will charge without their packs, in order to run better. If their clothes bother them, they will go stark naked, but they will jump upon Hill 140!'

The officers put on their best uniforms, with all their medals, and wore fresh white gloves, as if going to dress parade. Many of them carried short swagger sticks, instead of swords.

No better account of the great battle of May 9 could be given than that written by Kiffin Rockwell from hospital under date of May 15:

'Well, I am lying between two nice, clean sheets now for the first time in nearly nine months, so I guess you know how good it must feel.

'We went to the trenches on May 5th to stay forty-eight hours, as the trenches were only a little over one hundred metres apart, and there was nothing to do but stand guard and work building tunnels and *boyaux* toward the German trenches. When our two days were up, instead of being relieved, we were told that there was to be an attack all along that line the coming night at midnight, and that our battalion was to lead our regiment. So all that day, every one was busy going to the rear for cartridges, food, etc., and also working throwing up an embankment nearly reaching to the barbed wire of the Boches. This work was very dangerous, as it was done under rifle fire and danger from bombs, but we were protected a little by our

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own rifle and artillery fire. I spent three hours at it and didn't like it a bit.

'We got everything ready, and at eight o'clock settled down to wait for the bombardment which was to precede the attack, but it didn't begin. At ten o'clock, we were told that the attack had been postponed, and that the following morning we would be relieved. So we went out to our temporary trench and spent the night on guard in it. The following morning we were relieved, and marched twelve kilometres to the rear (four of them through trenches).

'That night at seven o'clock I lay down thinking I would get a good night's sleep, having had only five or six hours' sleep in the last three days. At one o'clock in the morning, we were awakened and told to make our *sacs* at once. We left in short order, arriving in the second-line trenches at daybreak, where we took our position.

'In a few minutes it began to sound as if all hell had broken loose, when our artillery all along the line opened up on the Germans. The damndest bombardment imaginable was kept up until ten o'clock. Along the whole German line, you could see nothing but smoke and *débris*. At ten o'clock, I saw the finest sight I have ever seen. It was men from the *Premier Étranger* crawling out of our trenches, with their bayonets glittering against the sun, and advancing on the Boches. There was not a sign of hesitation. They were falling fast, but as fast as men fell, it seemed as if new men sprang up out of the ground to take their places. One second it looked as if an entire section had fallen by one sweep of a machine-gun. In a few moments, a second line of men crawled out of our trenches; and at seven minutes past ten, our captain called "*En avant!*" and we went dashing down the trenches with the German artillery giving us hell as we went.

'Just as we reached the first-line trenches, a shell burst near the captain, and left his face covered with blood. He brushed

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his hand across it, and I heard him say "*Cochons!*" and that it was nothing. Then he called for every one out of the trenches.

'We scrambled out, and from then on it was nothing but a steady advance under rifle, machine-gun, and artillery fire. We certainly had the Boches on the run, but at the same time they were pouring the lead at us. We would dash forward twenty-five or fifty metres, and then, when the fire got too hot, would drop to the ground with our *sacs* in front of us, and lie there until we had our breath, and the bullets were not quite so thick. Then we would take our *sacs* in one hand as a kind of shield, and make another dash.

'To think of fear or the horror of the thing was impossible. All I could think of was what a wonderful advance it was, and how every one was going up against that stream of lead as if he loved it. I kept that up for five hours. By then we had advanced three or four kilometres, but were badly cut up and also mixed up with men from other regiments, mostly Algerian tirailleurs. Most of our officers had fallen, including the colonel and three commandants. (I understand that there now remain only four officers out of the whole regiment.) We had taken most of a village and were taking the rest of it. My outfit was a little to the left, and we were being raked by fire from in front and from the end of the village still held by the Germans.

'Skipper Pavelka and I were lying alongside the *sous-lieutenant* when a messenger came and told him that the captain and lieutenant had both fallen, and that he was in command of the company. The fire had been so heavy for the last half-hour that we had been advancing one man at a time to the section. The *sous-lieutenant* gave us the direction to take, and told us to follow him, one at a time. He jumped and dashed forward. I turned to Skipper and told him we might as well get it over with at once, so I started with Skipper behind me.

'I got about twenty metres when a bullet caught me in the thigh, through the fleshy part, without touching the bone. I

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continued for a few steps, and then toppled over. Skipper saw me drop, so dropped also in order to bandage me up if necessary. But I told him I could do it myself and for him to go ahead. I crawled over to a *marmite* hole, and into it. There I examined my wound and bandaged it; then turned my attention to a comrade of the Hundred and Fifty-Sixth Regiment who was lying there. He had been shot through both hips and afterwards a piece of shell had gone through his stomach. I tried to bandage him up, but he was dying and I could not do any good. He wanted water, but I had none and could get none for him. That was the cry going up everywhere, for water. I stayed there until he died.

'The line had not advanced any more, and the fire was terrific. While I was lying there, three shells exploded within ten metres of me, each time covering me with dirt. The last one landed within five or six metres of me. I would hear them coming and would say to myself, "Well, it is over," and shut my eyes. Then I would brush the dirt off, and find that I was all right. Finally, I crawled out of the hole, and up to the line where the men were; but they told me to crawl to the rear, saying the Boches might counter-attack, and then I would be captured. I knew they were right, so I started snake-fashion for the rear. I made about a kilometre that way to a haystack where there were several other wounded men. It was dark then, so I rested there and put my bandage on again, as it had come off. After a while a Red Cross man came. He told us that there were so many wounded that it would probably be the following day before we could get transported to the rear. So I found a stick and managed to hobble two or three kilometres more to a farm, where there were a large number of wounded.

'I slept there that night, and the following morning continued on my way. Finally, by walking some and riding a little on an artillery cart, I got to a place where I was given my evacuation card, and at midnight was able to get on a hospital train.

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It was very crowded, and by the following day my leg was too sore for me to move about much.... I went four days without any attention to my wound (there were so many more badly wounded than I that I did not have the heart to ask for care)....

‘An afterthought: the Legion has again come into its own. We took prisoner the Boche colonel that was mentioned in the papers.’

Men belonging to the *élite* of over fifty nations fell on May 9, charging with the Legion across the plains of Artois. Colonel Pein, carried away by the enthusiasm of his men, refused to remain at his observation post, grabbed the rifle of a fallen soldier, and joined in the charge. At the Ouvrages Blancs he remarked a body of Germans coming out of a dugout with the intention of firing upon the Legionnaires from the rear. Turning with a handful of men to charge them, he was shot through the body, and fell mortally wounded. His last words were: ‘I am all right. I fear there are many who will remain upon the battlefield. I am proud of my Legionnaires.’

One sweep of machine-gun fire killed Commandant Noiré, the leader of Battalion C; a fifty-year-old Belgian stretcher-bearer, Corporal Van Mengen; Corporal Oneger, a young Russian student; a Polish doctor, Major Neuflagel; and Theodorakis, a Greek stretcher-bearer; they all fell in a heap just outside the French barbed-wire entanglements.

Commandants Gaubert, of Battalion A, and Muller, of Battalion D, were also killed, as were four captains and thirteen lieutenants. Captain Boutin, leader of the Americans’ company, was slain early in the charge. Captain Osmont d’Amilly fell mortally wounded at the Ouvrages Blancs, saying to the men who wanted to carry him to the rear: ‘Don’t bother with me. *En avant!*’ Lieutenant Dostal, a Czech officer, was killed; before the war he had been an officer in the Austrian artillery, and was one of the organizers of the Czech Volunteer Corps. Lieutenant de Malcy, a Pole, fell leading his fellow Poles forward.

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At the third-line German trenches mines set off by electricity killed ninety Greeks and their officers, and wounded one hundred and sixty others of the Greek company.

Almost all the other officers were wounded, including Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, Colonel Pein's second in command. Captain Junod, a Swiss and one of the most beloved officers in the Legion, was shot through the lung and the leg by machine-gun bullets as he led the first wave of attack with the cry: '*En avant, mes enfants! Courage!*' Near him was slain one of his best men, a Spanish marquis who had enlisted to avenge a son killed near Reims.

Adjutant Sedley lay dying at the Ouvrages Blancs, his body riddled with shell pieces. Taking a bit of note-paper from his pocket, he dipped a piece of wood in his own blood and painfully traced the words: '*Je meurs content, puisque nous sommes victorieux! Vive la France!*' (I die content, because we are victorious! Long live France!)

Bugler Theissen climbed up onto a haystack in the middle of the battlefield, and sounded the charge until he was killed by an enemy sharpshooter.

Three young poets of acknowledged talent were among the slain: the Spaniard Ferrés-Costa; Hernando de Vengoechea, from the Colombian Republic; and Rodolfo Lemmario, of Ecuador. Vacareano, a brother of the Royal Procurator of Roumania, was also killed. Three brothers from the Argentine Republic, who came over together for the war, fell in death side by side, cut down by one burst of machine-gun fire.

None of the American volunteers was killed. Jack Cordonnier was hit over the heart by a bullet, which struck a rib and tore a nasty hole downward. Jack Janz was hit in the shoulder by a bullet; as he started toward the rear, a huge piece of shell casing went deep into his hip. 'I got it going and coming,' Jack afterward said. Frank Musgrave tumbled into a deep trench just as he reached the enemy lines, and dislocated his shoulder.

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Finding a doctor who was following the wave of assault, he had the shoulder pulled back into place, and rejoined his comrades in the charge. Two of the Italians in the American squad were killed.

Both of the eyes of Blondell, a Swedish stretcher-bearer, were torn out by an exploding shell. Pechkoff's right arm was riddled with bullets near the shoulder, and was hastily amputated.

The Moroccan Division by nightfall had driven a hole ten kilometres deep into the German lines. Such a rapid advance was entirely unexpected by the French high command, and the necessary reserves for holding the terrain gained did not arrive in time. The Germans re-formed their lines of resistance, and with fresh troops counter-attacked during the night. With rage in their hearts, the sadly decimated battalions of *Legionnaires*, *Zouaves*, and *tirailleurs* were forced to fall back, and retained only four kilometres of their dearly bought terrain.

The Legion alone captured over one thousand unwounded Germans, including many officers. A band of Russian volunteers captured in a machine-gun pit a Bavarian officer. Hearing them speak together, the Bavarian asked in good French, 'What language are you speaking?' 'Russian,' was the reply. 'What? There are Russians here?' 'Yes, a battalion.' 'But what regiment?' insisted the German. 'The Foreign Legion,' he was informed. 'Ah! The Legion! The Legion! Then I am no longer astonished!' exclaimed the prisoner.

Among the prisoners was recognized a Bavarian who had deserted from the Legion in Champagne, and had joined a Bavarian regiment brought up from the Champagne front to Artois to oppose the French attack. The deserter was speedily court-martialled and shot.

The losses of the Legion were tremendous. Of the four thousand men who went into the attack, some seventeen hundred came through unscathed. Of the company in which was the American squad, fifty-five men out of the two hundred and fifty

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who climbed out of the trenches on the morning of May 9 answered the roll-call, when the regiment was drawn out of the firing line.

The Legion gained its first citation in Army Orders:

Second Marching Regiment of the First Foreign Regiment: Ordered, May 9th, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, to take with the bayonet a very strongly entrenched German position, launched itself into the attack, officers leading, with a superb enthusiasm, gaining in a single bound several kilometres of terrain, in spite of a most violent resistance of the enemy and the violent fire of his machine guns.

3

After the attack of May 9, there turned up in a Paris hospital Carl Jean Drossner, a San Francisco Jew, with a bullet hole through his left hand, and a beautiful story as to how the wound was received. Drossner's tale was that, as he charged the enemy lines alongside his captain, the latter fell wounded, and he picked him up and started carrying him to the rear. Another bullet passed through the American's hand and the captain's heart, but before the officer died, he found time to name Drossner a lieutenant on the battlefield, and to award him the *Croix de Guerre*.

Drossner's comrades told an entirely different story. He was the only private soldier in the regiment possessing an automatic pistol, and it was said that when the order came to leave the trenches and charge the enemy position, Drossner shot himself through the hand and hastened to the rear.

Drossner had already had trouble in the Legion. When he arrived at the Lyon *dépôt* as a volunteer in the fall of 1914, he brought with him his mistress, and installed her at a hotel in the city. Representing himself to various Lyon merchants as an American millionaire, he bought on credit several thousand dollars' worth of jewelry and gave it to the woman.

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Somewhat later, Drossner and his mistress were mobbed in a Lyon café, for standing up and shouting, '*Hoch der Kaiser!*' They escaped imprisonment by pleading drunkenness. The woman left Lyon, and Drossner deserted from the Legion. He was caught at a French seaport, trying to get out of the country, and brought back to Lyon.

Drossner was court-martialled, and sentenced to two years' hard labor. Upon the plea of his lawyer and the American Consul at Lyon, the sentence was suspended, and the American was sent to the front and given a chance to retrieve himself. The Lyon jewellers brought charges of swindling, but withdrew them when Drossner's mother appeared and promised to settle all outstanding bills. (The bills had not been paid several years later.)

The other Americans refused to have Drossner in their squad, when he arrived at the front, although he made many advances to them, and claimed to have been an officer in the United States Cavalry in the Philippines.

Drossner passed from one Paris hospital to another, getting into trouble everywhere he went. Pretending to be a nephew of Mrs. Alice Weeks, mother of Kenneth Weeks, he hired by the month a handsome automobile, but never paid for it. He finally met in a hospital the daughter of a rich French manufacturer and married her, but the marriage did not last long.

Drossner was discharged from the Legion. The correspondent of a New York newspaper wrote a two-page story featuring him as one of the great heroes of the war. When reproached with it, the correspondent replied: 'Yes, I know Drossner is an impostor, but his yarn made good reading, and got a big play in my paper.'

The Legionnaires were pulled back from the firing line on the night of May 10, and went first to Mont-Saint-Éloi; the Ger-

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mans shelled the town with heavy artillery, so the regiment marched on out of range to Tincques and Chelers, where the men rested, while the battalions were re-formed. Reënforcements arrived from the *dépôts*, and a battalion of eleven hundred Greeks came up from the Bois-le-Prêtre sector. These Greek Legionnaires were handy knife-fighters. While in the Bois-le-Prêtre trenches, a squad of them had once, just at nightfall, crawled over into an advanced German trench, which the enemy occupied only at night. Catching the Germans as they came one by one through the approach into the trench, the Greeks killed twenty of them with knives and crawled back into their own lines without losing a man. They did not like what they heard in Artois, however, and protested loudly against having been brought there, saying they had enlisted to go to the Dardanelles and fight the Turks.

Early in June, the Legionnaires went into the trenches around Carency, just north of La Targette and Neuville-Saint-Vaast, which they had captured on May 9. On June 16 they joined in a grand assault directed against the German positions about Souchez, including the powerfully fortified works of the Cabaret Rouge, the 'Labyrinth,' and Hill 119. Pavelka wrote from hospital on June 20 a vivid description of the battle:

'The attack commenced at noon on the 16th. It was led by the Moroccan Division, as on the 9th of May. Battalion B let go first in our sector, facing a most dreadful fire from machine guns, rifles, and shrapnel. The only thing for us to do was to cover the ground as quickly as possible, which we did, reaching the first of the Boche trenches to find they had fallen back to their second line. We took a short rest here rallying, as many of our boys fell on the way over. The Greeks were behind us, and soon came piling head over heels into the trenches where we were.

'Everything was mixed up from now on, as there were two battalions, B and C, in the short space of about three hundred metres.

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'The next move was even more difficult, for the Germans kept up a most terrible rifle and artillery fire in order to keep the reserve forces from coming up to our aid. But, nevertheless, out of the trenches we climbed, making for line number 2 as quickly as possible. Here I strayed away from my company, Neamorin and I being together. He soon got a bullet in the side; I laid him in a *marmite* hole, and pushed on. How many times I was compelled to lie down I could not say, but eventually I managed to reach that dear old second line of Germany. Some surprise was in store for me, you can bet. As I reached the edge of the trench, I noticed the gray caps of the Bavarians, and almost instantly I felt a stinging pain shoot through my left leg. A Bavarian had stabbed me with his bayonet; he then threw up his hands and yelled "*Kamerad*," but I blew his brains out. I dropped just in front of the trench.

'The next was a mix-up of howling and hurrahing, for *tirailleurs*, the Zouaves, and the Legion were all piling in on them. It was soon over, the Germans getting out and running for their lives to our rear, without arms and nobody stopping them.

'I got into the trench now and the rest went on. The blood ran freely from my wound, so I put on the first-aid package. As I lay there I saw many wounded coming in, and ever so many prisoners. I looked out of my trench and saw our boys slowly gaining Hill 119, which was directly in front of me. It was easy to distinguish them, all having white cloths pinned on the back, and no sacks.

'I made my way to the rear unaided, and reached the *poste de secours*, where I got a wagon to Camblin Abbey. There I met Larsen, with his jaw shot away; Zannis the Turk, with his hips torn off by a piece of shell, and others of our company. I heard that the captain was killed, and Kelly and Smith were wounded. ... I've got one on you: I had ten packages of tobacco in my sack where you only had six. Well, you lost yours, and so did I mine.'

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Frank Musgrave added to Pavelka's account:

'Battalion A, which had suffered most on May 9th, reënforced B and the Greeks. We got out, and advanced slowly for a couple of kilometres, following the attack. B had gone out, and I understand the Greeks refused to go out and we passed and went ahead of them. By night we were almost in touch with the Germans, and were going forward with fixed bayonets.

'At daylight on the 17th we took and held a German trench far in the German territory, and though they tried to shell it down we held it all day. They advanced a battalion at four o'clock in the evening to carry it by storm, but, shelled out of the depression in which they had come up by the seventy-fives, when they broke for the open they had to face such a furious fire from the Legionnaires that they fled for the rear and were exterminated to a man.

'We were relieved at daylight the 18th by a French regiment. My battalion losses were not so heavy as May 9th, and mostly caused from shell-fire, although the battalion inflicted a good deal of loss on the Boches. But B was hit hard, and when we got back to Mingoville I searched in vain for the Americans.... The regiment never recovered from that stunt. I never suffered so much from heat, fatigue, thirst, and other breeds of misery as on that occasion.'

The losses of the Legion on June 16 were even more terrific than on May 9. Thinking to avoid loss of life from their own artillery fire, the Legionnaires charged without sacks and with large squares of white cloth sewn on the backs of their coats. The artillery observers were instructed to watch these white squares and to keep the artillery barrage always directed in front of them. Unfortunately, the observers, who were stationed in tree-tops and on roofs, were killed early in the battle, and, as on May 9, hundreds of French soldiers were killed by their own artillery fire.

Germans hidden in deep underground shelters came out after

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the waves of assault passed and fired on the attackers from behind with machine-guns and rifles. They had tried the same trick on May 9, and on June 16 two men in each squad in the Legion were given long knives and bags of hand grenades and instructed to clear out every shelter where foes might be lurking. Kenneth Weeks was one of the men entrusted with this dangerous mission.

When the first order to leave the trenches was given, the Greeks refused to obey. Colonel Cot, commanding the Legion, rushed over and argued with them, promising that they would be sent to the Dardanelles after the attack, and induced them to join in the charge. A regiment of Algerian *tirailleurs* advancing behind them probably hastened the decision, but once they got started, the Greeks did brilliant work.

Some sections of Legionnaires got mixed in with the Zouaves and the *tirailleurs* and helped carry the 'Labyrinth,' where some of the fiercest hand-to-hand fighting ever known occurred. The main body, however, stormed Hill 119, successfully carrying the extensive fortifications on the western slopes and the crest. Several companies broke far through the enemy's lines at the Cabaret Rouge, but were entirely cut off and surrounded by the Germans. Every man in the detachment is supposed to have fallen, as none was ever heard from again.

The supporting regiments failed to arrive, and nightfall found the greatly depleted band of Legionnaires stubbornly holding on to the crest of Hill 119, repelling counter-attack after counter-attack. The Germans kept up a terrific bombardment throughout the night and the following day, and the Legionnaires' supply of ammunition was virtually exhausted and the men dying of thirst and fatigue when relief arrived during the night of July 17.

Few men answered the roll-call behind the lines. Harmon Dunn Hall, who had arrived with the reënforcements from Lyon just before the attack, was killed early in the battle. He

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was one of a machine-gun section, and with his comrades rushed over to a captured German first-line post and set up his piece. The enemy was keeping up an intense fire, and the Legionnaires were poorly sheltered, as what had been the unprotected rear of the trench was now the attacked front. It was necessary to crouch low in order to be safe, but Hall kept putting his head up and looking out to observe the enemy's movements.

'Keep your head down,' advised a sergeant.

'I'll not duck my head for any damned Boche,' replied the American.

A few minutes later a bullet crashed through Hall's brain. Near him fell his closest friend in the Legion, Joseph Ben Said, the favorite son of a Moroccan chief.

Kenneth Weeks, Russell Kelly, and John Smith were listed as missing. Kenneth Weeks, after the battle of May 9, had been put in a squad of Italians, and some of his comrades who turned up later in hospitals reported that the last they saw of him he was dashing towards a machine-gun nest in the German third line, hurling grenades at the foe. Weeks had been cited for coolness and bravery during the storming of La Targette, and proposed for a corporal's stripes, it being understood that he was to take charge of the American squad.

Kelly and Smith were reported seen in a German second-line trench; Kelly with a bullet through the thigh, and Smith with a bullet in the shoulder. Neither was dangerously hit, but both were too weak from loss of blood to crawl to the rear, as did some of their wounded comrades. The enemy counter-attacked later in the evening, and retook the line where the injured Americans were lying; they were believed to have been massacred, as certain units of the German Army refused to take prisoner any soldier of the Legion.

Lawrence Scanlan was first reported missing, but was later found dangerously wounded. He described his experience as follows: 'We all left the advanced trench together, but I soon

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found myself in the Greek battalion, and with it I reached the first German trench. Some distance away I saw my captain and other Americans and I started over to them. Then machine-gun bullets hit me, smashing my thigh and an ankle. After lying fifty-six hours on the battlefield, I was found by stretcher-bearers and carried to the rear. I have seen none of my comrades since that time.'

Scanlan was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre* as he lay in hospital, being the first American volunteer to receive that honor. His citation in Army Orders called him an exceptionally brave Legionnaire, and mentioned his gallant conduct on May 9 and June 16.

Frank Musgrave was the only American in the attack who came through it unscathed, and was henceforth known throughout the Legion as 'Lucky' Frank. Corporal Didier was gravely wounded as he charged a German machine-gun nest, yelling and brandishing his rifle, and the veteran Legionnaire Godin was killed by a bullet through the head.

All the Legion officers taking part in the attack were either killed or wounded and the surviving men were commanded by sergeants and corporals.

Captain Wetterstrom, in whose company were most of the Americans, was killed. He was a Danish officer who had served for several years with the Legion in Morocco, and was one of the few officers untouched during the attack of May 9. His last citation in French Army Orders called him 'an officer of rare bravery, who gave proof always of a complete contempt for danger.' The flags over public buildings in Copenhagen were put at half-mast, when the news of Wetterstrom's death reached Denmark.

The celebrated Russian painter Koniakof was among the slain, as was one of the most unique characters in the entire Legion, a former priest who had been a Legionnaire for twenty years. Whenever he was scolded by an officer, this man would



RUSSELL KELLY

Missing in battle, June 16, 1915



KENNETH WEEKS

Killed near Souchez, June 16, 1915

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often reply: 'How can you talk like that to a man who still has the power to make God descend into the Host? I am clothed with a divine character; and I am also a victim of love!'

When he was twenty-five years old, the priest had seduced one of his fair young penitents, and eloped with her. She soon abandoned him, and to forget his sorrow he enlisted in the Legion. His only distraction was reading Latin classics, volumes of which he always carried with him in his sack.

Blaise Cendrars, the gifted Swiss writer, had an arm shot away, and received the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*.

Immediately after the battle the Greeks were sent away to fight their age-old foes in the Dardanelles, and all the Italian volunteers who so desired were allowed to join their national Army, as Italy had declared war. A few days before June 16, Lieutenant-Colonel Cot had assembled his regiment, and called for all Italians who wished to go into the Italian Army to step forward. Not a man stirred.

'What's the matter?' asked Colonel Cot. 'Don't you want to fight under your own flag?'

'Yes, but after the attack,' came back the answer in chorus.

On June 24 the three hundred men left in the *Premier Étranger* hastened back into the firing line and aided in repelling a tremendous German attack. The losses were heavy, and included two officers killed, and one wounded. *Adjudant* Tixier's section sheltered itself behind a parapet of cadavers, and held its own against an entire enemy battalion. Then what was left of the regiment went far to the rear for a real repose.

The Legion had covered itself with glory in the two principal attacks of what was, next to Verdun, the most murderous battle of the entire war. The French lost something like one hundred thousand men killed in the struggle for the Artois Ridge. On May 9 and 10 alone, the number of French slain, wounded, and missing was over one hundred and seventy-five thousand. The

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very flower of the French Army had been brought north of Arras for the battle. The Germans had been installed since the autumn of 1914 on the long, isolated ridge, which is cut into two parts by the gap at Souchez village, and overlooks the entire Artois country. The capture of the ridge was of prime importance to the Allies, both strategically and economically. Behind it ran the Lille-Douai-Cambrai Railroad, used by the Germans as their main transversal line behind the northern front. The taking of Vimy Ridge would bring this railway under Allied artillery fire, while a further advance would cut it.

North of the ridge were the rich Bethune-Lens coal-fields, the possession of which was important during a war which all leaders recognized would be a long-drawn-out affair.

The French did not gain their main objectives, but the battle was not entirely a failure. A footing was secured on the ridge, thanks largely to the dash of the Moroccan Division and the Alpine troops fighting alongside them. For a moment the German front had been broken, and with proper support the men could have pushed on to an important victory. As it was, twenty-five square miles of territory were wrested from the enemy and held, and thousands of prisoners and many guns captured.

Kenneth Weeks's body was found between the lines when the French advanced near Souchez in November, 1915. He was posthumously awarded the *Croix de Guerre* with a striking citation:

Kenneth Weeks: An American citizen of a high intellectual culture, animated by the most noble sentiments, and having for France a profound admiration. He spontaneously enlisted at the beginning of hostilities, and has given proof of the most brilliant qualities during the campaign, and particularly distinguished himself June 16, 1915, during an attack against the German positions.

Weeks was born at Chestnut Hill, near Boston, Massachusetts,

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on December 30, 1889. Five of his ancestors came to America in the Mayflower. After studying architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he entered the Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1910. At the age of seventeen, he had written a one-act play, 'The Victory of Sedan,' and he finally decided to devote himself to literature. Between 1910 and 1914 he published five books of plays, short stories and essays, the last volume, 'Science, Sentiments, and Senses,' appearing when he was already in the trenches.

When Weeks first enlisted, he wrote his mother in America: 'In defending France I hope to defend you.' He was especially noted in his regiment for his unfailing cheerfulness and his kindness to his comrades. Possessing a large fortune, Weeks shared all the comforts and luxuries he could obtain with the men about him. Pavelka related two characteristic anecdotes of the man:

'We were *au repos* at Verzenay, and quartered in a big farmhouse. Two of the old Legionnaires, who always chummed together, were tormenting a young, undersized soldier, whom they were in the habit of bullying. Kenneth, who was sitting smoking in the courtyard, called to them to let him alone, which was only an encouragement to them to increase their torments. At that Kenneth arose and, knocking one down, was quickly knocked down himself. The other Americans, hearing the noise, came out, and there was a general fight, which was ended only by the officers interfering. Kenneth was always too good; he gave money and shared food and clothing sent him with us all. He even gave his wrist-watch to one of the men who wanted it.

'I shall never forget when we were stationed in a little village north of Arras for a few days. The village was in ruins, and the church, as usual, had had its share of shells. Kenneth entered the church, and finding that the organ was uninjured, sat down and played. Some of the villagers, hearing the well-known voice of happier days, came to ask if he would play them a service,

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which he did the following day. The boys went there in the afternoon, and he played for us.'

Just before the attack on June 16, John Smith gave to Paul Pavelka an envelope, marked 'To be opened in case of my death.' After long inquiry amongst the Legionnaires who survived the battle, including a number of wounded in hospitals, Pavelka and Paul Rockwell were convinced that Smith had been killed, and opened the envelope. It contained a slip of paper on which was written in pencil:

'Please tell Mrs. James B. Taylor, Wooster, Ohio, that her son Earl is dead.'

Correspondence with his mother revealed the fact that 'John Smith's' real name was John Earl Fike. His family had not heard from him for years. When he volunteered in the Legion, he had taken the name of a grandfather, Captain John Smith, of the Sixty-Second Ohio Volunteers, who fought in the Civil War, not because he had any reason to hide his identity, but because he evidently found it more romantic to fight under the name of a soldier ancestor.

Fike's body was never found, nor was that of Russell Kelly. The latter's father, James E. Kelly, a New York lawyer, for years refused to believe that his son was dead. Reports came back from various sources that Kelly had been wounded, and was in hiding behind the German lines in Northern France or in Belgium. The uncertainty of his fate was heightened by a communication sent his father by an Englishwoman, saying that she had received a letter from a relative in the British Army, stating that he and two other English soldiers, together with an American of the French Army named Kelly, had been hiding behind the German lines east of Souchez since the middle of June.

Kelly had been badly wounded in the head, the letter said, and the four soldiers were being supplied with food and clothing by French peasants. The letter was written in September, 1915, and surreptitiously passed through the lines.

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An *adjudant* belonging to Kelly's regiment sent word to the Lyon *dépôt* in January, 1916, that he had seen Russell Kelly and two other Legionnaires prisoners in Belgium. He stated that one of Kelly's legs had been amputated, and that the American was very careful not to disclose his nationality. The International Red Cross at Geneva made a careful investigation of the matter, and reported that Russell Kelly's name did not appear on any list of prisoners held by the Germans.

When he left the Lyon *dépôt* for the front, Russell Kelly wrote his father: 'I miss all my folks and often think of New York. I am carrying a talisman in the form of a Yale key which belongs to the front door of our apartment. I have become attached to it and would feel its loss keenly. On the brace supporting the teeth is the word "Security." A person with a lively imagination might find some hidden meaning in this.'

Kelly's talisman never brought him home.

Chapter V

THE THIRD MARCHING REGIMENT

VICTOR CHAPMAN, who had been studying architecture in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts, after having attended Harvard College, was touring in England with his family at the outbreak of war. He returned to France early in September, enlisted in the Foreign Legion, and was sent to the Third Marching Regiment of the First Foreign Regiment, whose *dépôt* was at the Reuilly Caserne, Paris. Alvan F. Sanborn, of Boston, Massachusetts, a graduate of Amherst College in the class of 1887, a member of Phi Beta Kappa honor society, and a newspaper man and author who had been living in France for a number of years, although well over the usual age for military service, insisted upon being taken into the French Army and was sent to Reuilly Barracks, where other American volunteers kept arriving during several weeks.

Most of the Americans who enlisted in Paris after August, 1914, were assigned to the *Troisième Régiment de Marche du Premier Régiment Étranger*, which was at first called the 'Marching Regiment of the Foreign Legion of the Entrenched Camp of Paris.' Among those sent to the Reuilly Caserne were Walter K. Appleton, Jr., of New York and Paris, a young scion of the well-known American family of publishers, who gave his calling as that of jockey; John Brown, a Boston Negro who was picking a banjo in a Montmartre orchestra when the war started; Christopher Charles, of Brooklyn, New York, an eighteen-year-old mechanic who crossed the Atlantic to fight; William E. Dugan, Jr., son of a Rochester, New York, shoe manufacturer and a graduate of Rochester University, who gave up a re-

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sponsible position with the United Fruit Company in Central America to come to France and enter the Foreign Legion; Frank Dupont, an American citizen of French extraction, already with five years in the Legion to his credit.

There were Eugene Jacob, of Woonsocket, Rhode Island, an elderly man who left his butcher and grocery shop in charge of his wife to hasten across the ocean and fight for France, and another middle-aged man, John Laurent, a New York actor.

Others included Robert Mulhauser, of Cleveland, Ohio, born in the Far East of American parents who were in the exporting business, in which he himself engaged until he became a soldier; Phil Rader, a newspaper cartoonist and adventurer, with many addresses; Marius Rocle, of New York, seventeen years old and the youngest 1914 American volunteer; Michael Steinfels, of Chicago, Illinois, German-American parentage; Henry Walker, another Boston, Massachusetts, Negro and a chauffeur by trade.

On September 30 arrived Frank Whitmore, of Richmond, Virginia, a thirty-eight-year-old chicken farmer who had come to France as soon as he could sell out his business and get passage across the Atlantic, after the outbreak of war.

Bartlett Brooke Bonnell, of Westfield, New Jersey, left his desk in a Wall Street stock-broker's office, arrived in Paris in September to enlist, and was also sent to Reuilly Caserne, with John G. Hopper, of San Francisco, who volunteered on the same day. Hopper was a distinguished mining engineer and explorer, and had worked with Herbert Hoover in Mexico, where he had developed gold and silver mines. Among many interesting experiences, he had spent a winter in Northern Alaska with an Esquimaux tribe; explored parts of the Arctic regions with Captain Raoul Amundsen; prospected in wildest Spain and found iron deposits; spent much time in Greece, where he made a geological map of Thessaly, Macedonia, and Crete, and discovered oil on the latter island.

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The *Troisième Régiment de Marche* was composed largely of foreigners who had been permanent residents of Paris, and was officered chiefly by firemen from the Paris Fire Brigades (the Paris Fire Department is a military organization, subject to Regular Army control and regulations), with Colonel Thiebault, chief of the Gendarmerie of the Seine Department, as commander. There were very few veteran Legionnaires in the regiment, and many of the volunteers belonged to the most sedentary professions, which caused the period of training to be long. Matters were further complicated by the presence in the regiment of a number of *apaches*, the very dregs of the foreign population of Paris. These men had been rounded up by the police, marched to the recruiting bureau, and told either to enlist in the Foreign Legion or go to jail. Contrary to popular tradition, these rascals did not make good and brave soldiers, but, on the contrary, did everything in their power to postpone the day for going to the front. Fortunately, they were in the great minority in the regiment.

The lengthy period of training was very irksome to the Americans, and there was general rejoicing among them when the regiment left on November 28 for the Somme front. Before quitting Paris, John Hopper bought a metal wreath, put on it a ribbon labelled '*Prix d'Encouragement*,' and announced that it would be awarded to the first member of the regiment to be killed. The march north was slow, because of bad weather and the poor condition of some of the men, and it was December 15 before the Legionnaires went into the trenches around Frise. There conditions were very bad: the dugouts were poorly made, there was mud everywhere, and often water ankle-deep in the trenches.

A few days after arrival at the front, Phil Rader obtained leave to go to a large town in the rear to get fitted with new glasses, on the pretext that his old ones were broken. He did not stop at the town, but continued on, and got across the Channel



EDMOND CHARLES CLINTON GENET



JOHN G. HOPPER
*With his wreath offered to the first member of his
 regiment to be killed*

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to England. In London he met an American newspaper man, who wrote a very lurid series on life in the Legion from accounts furnished by Rader, whose name was signed to them. These stories were among the first published in the United States purporting to describe the life of the American volunteers at the front in France.

Rader next enlisted in the British Royal Flying Corps. When he had received sufficient instruction as an aviator, he borrowed an English comrade's motor-cycle, rode across England to Liverpool, sold the motor-cycle, and embarked for America. He obtained some success and money lecturing in the United States, and several months later fell to his death in an aeroplane while doing exhibition flying.

Eugene Jacob was named corporal, and put in a machine-gun company, along with Victor Chapman. Chapman struck up a great friendship with George Preston Ames, a volunteer from Paraguay and also a machine-gunner. Ames was at one time the central figure in a sensational 'kidnapping case' featured by American newspapers. His father was from Baltimore, Maryland, and had been established for years as a dentist in South America, where he married. His wife died when George was a baby, and George was brought up by his father's sister in Baltimore. When he became large, his father wanted him back; the aunt refused, and the father 'kidnapped' him and took him back to South America. The aunt preferred charges against George Ames's father, but did not get the boy back.

John Hopper was put in charge of the map-making for the regiment, with a number of men under his orders. He was especially popular with his section because he supplemented the army fare with delicacies paid for from his own pocket.

Eugene Jacob was buried alive by the explosion of a bomb, hurled over by a trench-mortar in the near-by enemy lines. Chapman and Ames braved an intense machine-gun fire, and dug Jacob out, little the worse for the experience. Jacob got

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busy, and devised a bombproof shelter, which came to be used throughout the regiment.

Chapman told of his regiment's first Christmas in the trenches in a letter to an uncle:

‘December 26, 1914

‘Xmas in the trenches was interesting but not too exciting. Beginning the eve before, “conversations” in the form of calls: “*Boches*,” “*Ça va*,” etc. In response: “*Bon camarade*,” “*cigarettes*,” “*nous boirons champagne à Paris*,” etc. Christmas morning, a Russian up the line, who spoke good German, wished them the greetings of the season, to which the *Boches* responded that, instead of nice wishes, they would be very grateful to the French if the latter buried their compatriot who had lain before their trenches for the last two months. The Russian walked out to see if it were so, returned to the line, got a French officer, and a truce was established. The burying funeral performed, a German colonel distributed cigars and cigarettes, and another German officer took a picture of the group. We, of course, were one half-mile down the line, so did not see the ceremony, though our lieutenant attended. No shooting was interchanged all day, and last night absolute stillness, though we were warned to be on the alert. This morning, Nedim, a picturesque childish Turk, began again standing on the trenches and yelling at the opposite side. Vesconsoledose, a cautious Portuguese, warned him not to expose himself so, and since he spoke German made a few remarks showing his head. He turned to get down and — fell! a bullet having entered the back of his skull: groans, a puddle of blood.’

In later letters, Chapman said:

‘I have run across several South Americans — fine specimens — good shots, generous, who crossed the ocean since the declaration to fight. And they are not afraid of risking their skins. One I know is going out to-night between the trenches

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to try to catch a Boche. I talked to an American who went out on a fool's errand to entice a German out last night without success. A Russian was to play wounded and ask help: the innocent supposition being that kind-hearted enemies would come out. They had not even begun groaning when the Germans sent up rockets and chased the couple with "*Moulines à café*" (Maxim guns).

'Jacob is a wonder. We had roast pork yesterday, and this morning, head-cheese. The day before, veal. Jacob's manner of preparing these left-over parts of the animal makes them more delicious than the usual parts. I am sure he has educated more than half Rhode Island as to how to live. He told me how he revolutionized the butchers in Pocasset.

'I continue to run across amusing characters. A Bedouin who ran away from his native land because he killed the chief. He travelled all through North Africa and paid his way because he could read the Koran, and is here because a French officer saved his life when he had the smallpox; whereupon he swore to serve France in her next war. Ames talks Spanish to him; he knows very little French.

'I just saw Dugan, a little American chap who tells me of the *petit poste* where he watches from time to time. The trenches of his company are eight hundred metres from the enemy, but each side has long *boyaux* which lead out to little advance forts where a section at a time watch for half a day. Thirty-odd metres off there is a similar German post. Of course they interchange expressions of disgust, especially at sunrise. I have noticed this before. I suppose it is because at that hour the officers of neither side are yet on the job. One Boche spoke up in French: "Don't shoot! What's the use!" A *Légionnaire* thereupon fired off a gun, whereupon the other responded, "*Bande de salauds!*" Oh, some of these Germans speak excellent French and better Parisian slang. One German rather got the section's goat, as Dugan expressed it. For the longest time he upbraided them,

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his voice coming from some where near by. They searched all about and peeped from every corner of the little trench, but never a sign. At times he would call back to his friend in the German post, "Hans," who roared with laughter. Dugan now suspects that he must have been inside of an abandoned tin sprinkler.'

The Third Marching Regiment lost heavily during the winter. Michel, a genial Texas Negro who came over for the war, was shot through the head as he looked out of a trench. Whitmore was wounded in the foot by a hunk of shrapnel and spent several weeks in the hospital at Beauvais. Chapman got a bullet through the fleshy part of the arm, but had a first-aid bandage put on and refused to leave the trenches. Hopper was injured in the spine, and lay in the hospital for months partially paralyzed. Sanborn came down with pneumonia from standing up to his knees in water while on outpost one freezing night, and almost died. He and Hopper were both invalidated out of the Legion when they were discharged from the hospital.

Reënforcements came up from Paris, amongst them four unusually fine Americans: Henry Weston Farnsworth, of Boston, Massachusetts; Edmond Charles Clinton Genêt, of Ossining-on-Hudson, New York; Joseph Lydon, of Salem, Massachusetts; and David E. Wheeler, of Buffalo, New York.

Farnsworth was educated at Groton, where he remained six years, and at Harvard College, where he entered in the fall of 1908, after a summer abroad. In early November of 1909, wanderlust struck him, and he slipped quietly away from college, and worked his way to England as deck-hand on a cattle-boat. From there he sailed steerage in a small boat bound for Australia; at Freemantle, the first port of call, he was knocked unconscious in a side street, and robbed of everything he had, even his shoes. He got back to the steamer, landed at Melbourne, and spent seven months up-country, where he worked on several sheep stations.

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Returning home, he graduated with his class at Harvard in 1912, and sailed the next week for Europe. He visited Budapest, Constantinople, thence by boat to Odessa, and travelled up to Moscow and St. Petersburg, joined his family in Paris in September and returned to America. The outbreak of the Balkan War in the autumn of 1912 drew him back to Europe for a while, and he wrote a book of his experiences, 'The Log of a Would-be War Correspondent.' Going to Mexico during the troubles there in 1913, he wrote articles for the Providence 'Journal,' on which newspaper he later worked for a time as a reporter.

He returned to Mexico when the United States sent troops to Vera Cruz in the spring of 1914, and was in Mexico City when the World War started in Europe. He immediately sailed for France, and first drilled with an independent corps organized in Paris by an Englishman named Bles, a veteran of the Boer War. This corps being refused by the French War Department, Farnsworth enlisted on New Year's Day, 1915, in the Foreign Legion.

Edmond Genêt was a great-great-grandson of 'Citizen' Genêt, first Minister to the United States of the French Revolutionary Government in 1792. The French Revolutionary leaders became displeased with the 'Citizen's' conduct in America, and ordered him to return to France. Knowing that if he returned he would be massacred, as had been most of his friends, the 'Citizen' settled in Albany, New York, and married a daughter of Governor Clinton.

Edmond, the young descendant of this marriage, was not yet eighteen years old in the fall of 1914, and was serving in the United States Navy. He had been at Vera Cruz in the spring, aboard the battleship Georgia. He tried without success to obtain his discharge, after the outbreak of the World War, and while on leave in New York, applied to the French Consulate for a passport, stating that he must go to France to inquire

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about a family estate. He was obliged to go to Washington to obtain his passport, and to declare his age as twenty-one. After some delay, he sailed for France and entered the Legion.

Joseph Lydon was also very young. He had worked as cook on a coastwise freight vessel, and as street-car conductor in Boston. Eager to fight the Germans, he crossed the ocean on a horse-ship.

Wheeler was about forty-two years old, and already had seen much of the war as surgeon in a military hospital near the front before he joined the Legion. He was a graduate of Williams College, and received his surgical training at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. He was a keen sportsman, had travelled widely, hunted big game in Canada, and had spent considerable time exploring the unknown regions of Labrador. He had a son in boarding-school in America, and a wife who had come to France to nurse in a military hospital.

American college fraternities were well represented in the trenches in France in 1914-15. William Dugan and William Thaw were both Alpha Delta Phis, which Dugan joined at Rochester University and Thaw at Yale. Achilles Olinger was initiated into Alpha Tau Omega at Lehigh University, and Kiffin and Paul Rockwell belonged to the Washington and Lee University chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon. Alvan Sanborn was a member of Psi Upsilon at Amherst College, Kenneth Weeks of Delta Kappa Epsilon at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and David Wheeler joined the Northern Order of Kappa Alpha at Williams. Russell Kelly was a member of the Southern Order of Kappa Alpha at the Virginia Military Institute. In addition, Chapman, Carstairs, Farnsworth, King, and Stone had all belonged to good clubs at Harvard College.

Chapter VI

CHAMPAGNE

THE other regiments of the Foreign Legion, deathly tired of trench life, greatly envied the *Premier Étranger* its gallant part in the battle of Artois. When the news of Kiffin Rockwell's wound reached his former comrades of the Second Regiment, Alan Seeger, Capdevielle, Jack Casey, Fred Zinn, and others sent him enthusiastic messages of congratulation.

The Second Regiment was moved from the Aisne sector, where it had spent a terrible winter, and on May 23 was transported in auto-busses to the Reims sector recently abandoned by the First Regiment. Edgar Bouligny was slightly wounded during a midnight brush with a German patrol between the lines near Sillery, but after a few days in the infirmary reported for service again. Charles Sweeny was promoted *sous-lieutenant*, the first American volunteer of 1914 to become an officer in the Legion.

On July 4, the American Legionnaires were granted the first leave of absence since enlisting, and were allowed forty-eight hours to spend their national holiday in Paris. The leave was granted them at the request of Mr. F. B. Grundy, correspondent in Paris for the New York 'Sun.' Mr. Grundy was an Englishman; beyond the age for military service himself, he became the sincere friend of the Americans in the Legion, and did everything within his power to help them. His office was headquarters for American volunteers when on leave in Paris.

In addition to its heavy losses along the front, the effective of the Legion was further lessened by the departure for their na-

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tional army of the Belgian volunteers, and the liberation of the Russians, some of whom went into other French regiments, only a few staying in the Legion. Many of the Russian volunteers had made excellent soldiers, and their losses were heavy. Among the killed were the sculptor Vertepoff, the painter Krestovski, the revolutionary writer Stetoff, Jakovleff, leader of the bloody Moscow revolt, the anarchist Tadoskoff, and a host of other men famous or notorious in their native land. Almost the first Russian Legionnaire wounded was the elderly Onipko, member of the first Douma; another volunteer was Lebedeff, destined to become Minister of the Navy under the Bolshevik régime.

The Second Foreign Regiment was afflicted with a battalion composed almost entirely of Russian Jews and political exiles, which was permeated from the start with a spirit of revolt and anarchy. Many of its members had enlisted with no idea of ever going to the front. This battalion revolted in the early summer of 1915, and refused to leave for the trenches when ordered to do so. The colonel commanding the regiment gave the battalion forty-eight hours for reflection. As the Russians still refused to march, he then court-martialled and had shot eleven of the ringleaders, all Jews. Two of the rebels executed were the sons of a powerful St. Petersburg Jewish banker. This man appealed to the Imperial Government, to which he had loaned money, and within a week after the ringleaders of the Battalion F mutiny were shot, a Russian general appeared at the regimental headquarters and demanded that all the Russian volunteers in the Legion either be liberated or allowed to transfer to other regiments of the French Army. The Russian Embassy in Paris backed the request, which was granted by the French War Ministry. Henry Farnsworth wrote of the departure of the Russians in his regiment:

‘Long ago, during the bleak bombarded days in Cappy, the Russian Jews in the regiment set up a petition to get out of it

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(each hoping to himself to find a loophole of escape during the change of regiments). The other day, while we were peacefully in the trenches of Tilloloy, the petition bore fruit. Now they are to go to Russia or to a French Regiment — like Ahab, they leave unwept.'

The strength of the Third Marching Regiment was so lowered by its losses in the trenches, and the departure of the Italians, Belgians, and Russians, that it was decided to dissolve the regiment. On July 13, 1915, its remaining five officers and eight hundred and ninety-two Legionnaires were pulled out of the Santerre trenches, which they had held since June, and were sent to Montbéliard, where they went into the already celebrated *Premier Étranger*. With the arrival of these men and of reënforcements from Lyon, the *Premier* was able to muster two full battalions.

The two regiments of the Legion now went together to the Vosges Mountains for two months of well-earned rest in the tranquil Alsace sector of the front. There was very little trench duty or swinging of pick and shovel for the men; the two battalions of the First Regiment and the three of the Second marched along the picturesque military roads winding through the wooded mountains behind the French lines, climbed the Ballon d'Alsace and other famous peaks, camped in the open, and recuperated health and spirits in the vivifying air of the pine forests. It was the most delightful existence the men had known since the German menace first came out of the east.

The only casualties during the entire two months were in Boulogny's company, while it was quartered at Rodern, a tiny Alsatian village just over the hill from the enemy lines. A spy signalled from the hilltop that the company was having a roll-call in the street near the church; the German batteries shelled the spot, and Lieutenant Buffet and several men were killed. Boulogny himself narrowly escaped, a shrapnel ball cutting his coat.

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Victor Chapman left the Legion on August 1 to enter the Aviation Service, somewhat to his sorrow. He wrote his father on July 21:

'I shall regret it sincerely if my recall comes now before we have an attack. The regiment, as I told you before, did incredible things at Arras.... I now predict that my heavenly prospects are just going to miss each other by hairbreadths — I shall be transferred to the Aviation just before this company goes into action and makes a brilliant attack. And the war will end just before I get my license and go to the front.'

Chapman hated to leave the friends he had made in the Legion; especially Heredia, a Malaga Spaniard who translated Mark Twain into Spanish, and was a newspaper reporter in London at the outbreak of war; Nedim Bey, a Turk who was sent to Paris to study by the Turkish Government before the war, and had volunteered in August, 1914, and Cluny, an entertaining ex-sea-captain from Portuguese West Africa, who was full of tales of voyages around the world in command of a sailing vessel. A South American friend, José García Calderón, a gifted writer, painter, and architect and son of a former President of Peru, had left the regiment some weeks before to become an aviator.

Henry Farnsworth, Chapman's schoolmate at Harvard, and close comrade in the Legion, wrote:

'Victor Chapman, at his family's suggestion, has put in application for transfer to the Flying Corps, but I am fond of the *Troisième de Marche*, for all its grumbling and cursing; so as long as you are agreeable and our captain stays with us, I too shall stay.... The Foreign Legion is not a bit like Groton School or even Harvard College — and in my opinion has a far better spirit. Rules are many and strict. You break one and get caught. You make no excuses and are given a punishment. There is no ill-feeling on either side.'

Farnsworth was consoled over Chapman's departure by the

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presence of a Fiji Island Prince, S. L. V. Sukuna, to whom he had become much attached during their service together in the trenches. Sukuna was one of the interesting personalities in the Foreign Legion. His father was king of one of the larger islands of the Fiji group, while his maternal grandfather, King Thakombau, was the last great king of all the Fijis, who ceded the islands to the British Crown in 1874.

As a child, Sukuna did not get along well with his father, and at the age of ten ran away from home. Rowing over to a tiny island far from his father's domain, he took up his residence at the hut of a native fisherman. Here he remained for nearly four years, his father knowing where he was, but being too much interested in other things to send for him. The representatives of the British Crown finally became uneasy at seeing the lad growing up in ignorance. They feared that as a prince he might later stir up trouble among his people, so with the consent of his father he was sent to England to be educated. He was a student at Oxford in August, 1914. He at once attempted to enlist in the British Army, but was refused, so he immediately crossed to Paris and joined the Foreign Legion.

Farnsworth wrote home about Sukuna:

'When on guard I spend hours and hours imagining myself at home next autumn, that is, assuming the war ends this summer; also I talk with Sukuna about it all, and he knows you and Mamma and Papa, the horses, the polo.... I in turn know his little island, two hundred miles from Suva, where his father is chief; the island of Tonga, where he spends his time when possible; his room, Wadham College, Oxford, his friends there, and his chiefs at the Colonial Office in London, where he once worked as a kind of deputy commissioner from Fiji. I think I am possibly more fond of him than of any man I know. He's quite as amusing as the average, better educated, and of course knows the world well — in the travelling sense, I mean; also, to be comrades and share everything as we do through a winter

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campaign in our section is no mean test of character. I don't mean to seem to brag, but really he and myself are the only ones who came up from Paris together who have not let their nerves go a bit. Sukuna despises petty things and keeps his sense of proportion just what it was.

'I propose to bring Sukuna home with me, if the war ends before September. The term at Oxford does not open till November, and he has much reading to do before it does. He is black and has Polynesian features. I wonder if we at home are too parochial to stand for him. He is a chief at Fiji and a swell in England, with a crown agent to manage his money affairs, and all that sort of thing. I am afraid that just the people who would run their heads off to meet the people in England that he visits, and who write and send things to him, would be the ones to make themselves snobs if he appeared at Dedham with no other recommendation than he had been my comrade in the Foreign Legion.'

Another English-speaking black man in the Legion was a tall, fine-looking Gold Coast Negro, who had been educated in the United States to be a missionary.

'My father, sir, and my grandfather, both fought in the Foreign Legion,' he would say, 'and I think it only fitting that the third generation should serve under its flag. Besides, I feel that I can serve God as well by fighting the Germans as by returning to the Gold Coast to be a missionary to my people.'

This man was a great friend of Dr. Everett Wheeler, as was an extremely quiet, courageous Englishman, John Elkington, who, despite being over fifty years old, marched along as sturdily as the youngest Legionnaire.

Kiffin Rockwell transferred from the Legion to the Aviation on September 2. After being discharged from hospital, he spent the month of July convalescing in Paris, and there he ran across his old comrade William Thaw, in from the front, where he had been flying, to get a new aeroplane. Kiffin Rockwell's wound in

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the leg made it painful for him to make long marches, and Thaw suggested that he try to get into the Aviation. Kiffin put in at the French War Department a request for the transfer, and after some opposition from the Legion chiefs, loath to lose a good soldier, it was granted a month after he rejoined his regiment.

Victor Chapman and Kiffin Rockwell first met at Camp d'Avord, the Aviation training school, where Chapman arrived a few weeks late, having first flown at the front as machine-gunner and bomber. Chapman wrote:

'I find a compatriot I am proud to own here... called Rockwell. He got his transfer about a month ago from the Legion. He was wounded on the 9th of May. He gives much the best account I have heard.... "There is nothing like it; you float across the field, you drop, you rise again. The sack, the three hundred and twenty-five extra rounds, the gun, have no weight. And a ball in the head and it is all over — no pain."'

Kiffin Rockwell wrote on the same day:

'An American named Chapman, from the *Troisième de Marche*, arrived here this morning and seems to be a very fine fellow indeed.'

The entire Moroccan Division — the Legion, the Zouaves, and the Algerian *tirailleurs* — was passed in review on September 13, in a gorgeous scenic setting in the Vosges Mountains, and battle-flags were presented to the marching regiments of the First and Second Foreign Regiments. The old motto borne on the Legion's flags, 'VALEUR ET DISCIPLINE,' was replaced by a new one, 'HONNEUR ET FIDÉLITÉ,' and the banner of the men who had distinguished themselves north of Arras was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*.

Henry Farnsworth wrote of the ceremony:

'I was in the ranks beside Kraimer (a veteran Legionnaire) to-day, when, the division being drawn up, M. Poincaré and M. Millerand and Général de Castelnau and a lot of others pre-

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sented the regiment with a flag decorated with the *grande croix de guerre*. When the collective bugles crashed out with the "*Au drapeau*" and the twenty thousand rifles flew up to the present arms, there were tears in his eyes and he whispered, "*Chez nous à Bel à Bes on porte la Légion d'Honneur.*" It was characteristic that the Legion received its flag before the others, and that our colonel gave the commands.'

Captain Junod, who had just rejoined the Legion after convalescing at his home in Geneva, depicted the event also:

'I was greatly moved by the ceremony of the 13th, the bestowing of the flag to the *Premier Régiment Étranger*. At the moment where, on a marvellous day, our new flag began to unroll its three colors over the regiment, I began to weep like a child....

'In the haze of the setting sun, Mont Blanc appeared in the purple distance.'

Captain Junod's wounds of May 9 were not yet entirely healed. He had hastened back to his corps before his convalescence leave expired, because he had learned that the Legion was soon to participate in the mightiest effort yet made by the the French against the German hosts.

2

The Legion left the calm mountainous Alsace sector on September 15, and after a two days' ride in freight trains reached before dawn of the 17th a point just beyond Châlons-sur-Marne. After a day of repose, the two regiments marched at night to a position back of the lines beyond Suippes, and camped in the pine woods, which decades before were set out in an effort to enrich the poor Champagne soil.

That a movement of vast moment was afoot was evident everywhere. Towns, villages, and countryside were overrun with troops and the impedimenta of a huge modern army on the



AMERICAN VOLUNTEER LEGIONNAIRES BEFORE THE CHAMPAGNE
BATTLE, SEPTEMBER, 1915

*Facing the camera, left to right: Tony Paullet, Charles Sweeny, Alan Seeger, Elov Nilson
Robert Percy, George Delpuech, Fred Zinn, Siegfried Narvitz, Bob Scanlon
Dennis Dowd, Jack Casey, Paul Pavelka, Ferdinand Capdevielle (seated)
Sergeant Térisien (seated)*



THE FIRST DECORATION OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN WITH THE
MÉDAILLE MILITAIRE DURING THE WORLD WAR

Joseph Lydon receiving the coveted distinction from a French general

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eve of great battle. From every point along the railroad, marching lines of uniformed men swung out along the eastbound roads in countless numbers, each regiment followed by its train of supply wagons. Courtyards, squares, and fields were packed with artillery caissons, ammunition carts, Red Cross automobiles, ex-Paris motor-busses for rushing troops to various points along the firing line. Tethered all about were pack-mules for the carts and machine-gun ammunition and horses for the batteries and wagon convoys.

Huge herds of lowing cattle to provide fresh beef for the troops were parked here and there, near temporary warehouses piled high with great loaves of army bread. In addition, supplies of hard tack and tinned meats were distributed as reserve rations.

Steel helmets, an innovation in modern warfare just adopted by the French Army, were given out. The men grumbled at first at having to wear them, but not many hours later were most thankful for the protection they afforded. New model gas-masks, and a special grease to be rubbed on the hands, face, neck, and other exposed parts of the skin as a shield against liquid fire thrown by the German lance-flames, were issued.

The French Army had reached its peak of strength, and there was a vast increase over the earlier months of the war in the supply of heavy and field guns and ammunition. The French High Command aimed to break through the German lines along a twenty-five-kilometre front between the river Aisne and the Moronvilliers hills, and inflict upon the enemy a crushing defeat by turning his left flank north of Reims and his right in the Argonne, and capturing his armies before they could be withdraw.

The German position to be attacked was several miles deep, carefully organized with mazes of trenches and *boyaux*, and with deep underground shelters capable of resisting the fiercest bombardment. The position was further favored by the nature

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of the terrain, and protected by dense belts of barbed-wire entanglements, with machine-gun positions covering every possible angle of approach.

Both sides had learned lessons from the battles in Artois, and the French leaders were taking no chances of their assault failing a second time for lack of proper support. Every branch of their army was represented on the Champagne front: actives, reserves, and territorials of the line infantry; hussars, dragoons, mounted light infantry, and other cavalry divisions; Alpine and foot *chasseurs*; the professional French soldiers of the Colonial brigades, Zouaves, stalwart coal-black Senegalese; swarthy Arabs and Negroes from Morocco, Tunis, Algeria, and other French possessions in Africa; heavy and light artillery — all were there ready to go into action alongside the Legion.

There could be no question of a surprise attack: the stupendous bombardment preceding it would have warned the Germans, even if their spies and their aerial observers had not already learned what was brewing. For the first time in history, aeroplanes in considerable numbers were taking an important part in a battle. German aeroplanes flew over the French positions all day long, in spite of anti-aircraft cannon and aerial combats, and caused the French soldiers to keep out of sight as much as possible.

French aviators flew far behind the German lines, to observe and report what was going on there. Among them were two of the American Legionnaires of 1914, William Thaw and James Bach. The latter had the misfortune to become the first American to fall into the hands of the Germans, on September 23. Bach was sent on a special mission with a French pilot, Sergeant Mangeot. Their task was to land two French soldiers, dressed as civilians, behind the enemy lines near Mézières, where an important railway bridge was to be blown up.

The two aviators succeeded in landing their passengers, who hastened away with charges of high explosives. Bach then

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started off in his aeroplane, but, looking back, saw that his comrade had smashed his aeroplane in attempting to take off over the rough ground. Without hesitating, although well aware of the risk he was running, Bach turned his machine, landed again, and picked up Mangeot. Trying to take off the second time, he ran into a tree, and wrecked his aeroplane.

The men hid in the wood for a time, then tried to make their way back into the French lines. They were captured, however, and were court-martialed three times by the Germans on the charge of being spies. With the help of an able Berlin lawyer, they were acquitted and sent to a prison-camp, where Bach spent the remaining three years of the war.

Bombardment of the German lines began at daybreak of September 22 and continued without interruption for three solid days and nights. The din of the cannon was beyond description. Long-range guns sent an avalanche of huge shells onto the enemy crossroads and concentration points behind his lines, delaying and tremendously damaging his reserves. Short-range and field pieces smashed the German barbed-wire belts and pulverized his trenches. Millions of shells of all calibres were rained on the German lines, while his batteries replied ably and effectively.

A mean, cold rain added to the misery and discomfort of the situation. The Legion, joined to the Nineteenth Colonial Brigade, hugged the earth in the sparsely wooded hills between Souain and Perthes-les-Hurlus, and prayed for the attack to begin. Over fifty Americans were scattered about in its ranks, the largest number of American Legionnaires to participate in any one battle of the war. Three of them, 'Lucky' Frank Musgrave, Jack Cordonnier, and Paul Pavelka, were veterans of the Artois attacks; the remainder knew only trench life and local affairs. Cordonnier and Pavelka were just over their wounds of the early summer; Pavelka while in hospital had had the experience of giving English lessons to a class of young girls in a

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boarding-school located next door to the place where he was under care.

While waiting for the attack, some of the Americans from the *Deuxième Étranger* and the *Troisième de Marche* were talking of how glorious it must be to take part in a bayonet charge, and asked Musgrave for his opinion.

'If you have ever seen the Chicago slaughter-houses,' 'Lucky' Frank replied, 'you have already seen something like the carnage you will witness here.'

Undeterred by the rain, the grand assault was launched at nine-fifteen on the morning of September 25. The Second Foreign Regiment joined the second wave of attack; the First Regiment remained in reserve. With fixed bayonets, the French troops rushed forward through torrents of machine-gun and rifle bullets, shrapnel balls, shell splinters, and clouds of asphyxiating and tear gases, and in a whirlwind charge carried the first line of German trenches. Some of the battalions advanced a full kilometre in the first fifteen minutes of attack, broke into the wood along the Souain-Tahure road, and reached the slopes to the west of Tahure, where they were checked by the second line of enemy defense, insufficiently damaged by the preliminary bombardment.

The Legionnaires followed the first wave of attack, supported it, and captured in a bayonet and grenade fight the Wagram earthworks, the Eckmuhl trench, and many machine guns and a battery of seventy-seven cannon in the C-2 wood. At various points, where the barbed-wire belts were intact and unusually well-protected machine-gun nests installed, the fighting was exceptionally bitter, but by late afternoon all the Germans were driven out of their first-line defenses. Alan Seeger wrote:

'In some places they still resisted in isolated groups. Opposite us, all was over, and the herds of prisoners were being already led down as we went up. We cheered, more in triumph than in hate, but the poor devils, terror-stricken, held up their

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hands, begged for their lives, cried "*Kamerad*," "*Bon Français*"; even "*Vive la France*." It is inconceivable that a Frenchman, forced to yield, could behave as I saw German prisoners behave, trembling, on their knees, for all the world like criminals at length overpowered and brought to justice.'

The Second Foreign Regiment's casualties were many. Colonel Lecomte-Denis, commander of the regiment since December, 1914, when Colonel Passard was promoted brigadier-general, was wounded early in the attack, and most of the other officers and non-coms were killed or wounded.

Sous-lieutenant Charles Sweeny was shot through the chest by a machine-gun bullet. The regimental surgeon said he must die, and advised him to call a priest, but Sweeny refused to give up, and struggled for life. After lying for several days at the dressing-post, too weak to be moved, he was sent to hospital. He was given an excellent citation in Army Orders, and was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre* and the Legion of Honor; the first American citizen to receive the latter medal during the World War for military services.

Sergeant Bouligny was gravely wounded in the groin by a shell-splinter, shortly after he cleaned out with hand grenades a machine-gun nest that was holding up the advance of his section. Jack Casey was painfully wounded as he dashed forward, and saw most of the other men of his squad torn to pieces by a huge shell just after he fell. Tony Pullet, who had so entertained his comrades by his boxing bouts with Bob Scanlon in Alsace, was shot through the body by machine-gun bullets; Émil Dufour, Wilfred Michaud, and Fred Landreaux were gravely wounded, and Nick Karayinis was lightly cut several times by bullets and shell-splinters. Sergeant Térésien's right arm was literally shot off.

Morlae was buried by the explosion of a heavy shell late in the afternoon. Dennis Dowd, Robert Soubiran, Fred Zinn, David King, and two or three other Legionnaires quit the shal-

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low trench in which they were lying, and braving a heavy fire unearthed the unconscious sergeant and brought him back to life. Every one of these men had sworn time and again to kill Morlae at the first occasion, yet they unhesitatingly risked their own lives to save him.

The First Foreign Regiment did not charge on September 25, but suffered heavy losses in the reserve trenches from the enemy bombardment. In addition, a battery of French seventy-fives fired short, and shells began dropping among the Legionnaires. Bewildered by the bombardment from the rear, a panic was threatened for a moment, but was checked by Captain Junod, who climbed out of the trench and walked calmly along the parapet in full view of the enemy. Seeing his coolness, the men quieted down.

French cavalry dashed forward to charge the Germans who were fleeing toward their second position some four kilometres behind the first. Some of the horses fell into the trenches upon the Legionnaires, and killed and wounded a number of men.

Early on the morning of the 26th, the entire Moroccan Division, including both regiments of the Legion, was moved into a valley north of Souain. Its mission was to draw the enemy's fire in that direction, so that reënforcements could pass along the wooded ridge to the east and prepare an assault against the Butte de Souain and the Navarin Farm.

The Legionnaires passed two days and nights in a perfect inferno, without firing a shot, and sheltering themselves as best they could from torrents of rain and German shrapnel and gas-shells. The men took refuge of a poor sort in the underbrush and in shell-pits. The only consolation was piping hot coffee and food: the field kitchens were brought right up into the line, and the cooks worked heedless of the bombardment.

The morning of the 27th was foggy and misty, and fighting was temporarily suspended, while both armies paused to get their breath. About noon the fog lifted, and an enemy aeroplane

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flying low discovered the exact position of the Legionnaires in the wood. Smoke bombs were dropped, showing the German gunners where to fire, and a heavier shelling than ever set in. Many men were killed, but it was impossible to move to a better shelter. The watches were arranged that night so each man got about two hours' sleep, the first real rest for more than seventy-two hours.

The advance of the French troops had been along an uneven line, and the exact position of the German infantry was unknown. Patrols were sent out to locate the enemy position, early on the morning of the 28th. Marius Rocle volunteered for one patrol, and Frank Musgrave for another. Rocle's group accomplished its mission and returned to the French lines after suffering some losses. About an hour later, Musgrave returned alone.

'Where is your sergeant?' demanded the *adjudant*.

'Hung up in the Boches' barbed wire, along with my corporal and other comrades,' replied the American.

'Lucky' Frank reported that the barbed-wire belts defending the German second position were untouched by the French bombardment and absolutely intact. He and his comrades had stumbled right up against the entanglements hidden in the pines and underbrush, and had met with a terrible machine-gun fire, from which he alone escaped.

Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, impatient at seeing his regiment inactive under a bombardment that was rapidly cutting it to pieces, asked the general commanding the army corps to allow the *Premier Étranger* to attack. The regiment was given the mission of charging the earthwork or *fortin* in the Bois Sabot — the Horseshoe Wood — on the right of the almost impregnable Navarin Farm. This *fortin* was of almost a horseshoe shape, spreading out along the foot and sides of the gently sloping Butte de Souain. It had been prepared with great care and skill, and was regarded by the German Army engineers as one of the strongest points in their entire line of defense. A heavy

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bombardment had been directed against it, but the barbed-wire belts were so well hidden in the trees and underbrush, and the trenches and shelters so deep and so well covered with armored cement, that the position was virtually intact.

The Legionnaires were to make a blind sacrifice assault on the front of the *fortin*, and while the defenders were occupied with them, two other divisions were to attack on the west flank and carry the Navarin Farm.

The *Premier Étranger* started forward for the attack about three-thirty on the afternoon of the 28th. The men advanced through communication trenches and approaches hastily dug in the position already conquered from the enemy, and passed battalion after battalion of French soldiers waiting their turn to charge. The French looked curiously at the Legionnaires, asking who were these men that were being allowed to precede them in the attack. When the word was passed along that it was '*la brave Légion*,' there went up mighty applause and cheers of encouragement. The departure trenches, where the enemy had lately made a desperate stand, were reached. The field was strewn with dead and dying. The Algerian *tirailleurs* had already made two assaults against the Bois Sabot, and both times had been driven back with terrific losses. Ordered to charge for a third time, they started forward, but withered before the storm of lead, and broke for the rear. Edmond Genêt wrote:

'The Colonials who had been killed in the charge lay in ghastly wrecks before the German line, the sickly pallor of their hands and faces in awful contrast with the pools of blood about them. The wounded were being carried back as fast as possible.... Meanwhile we had started our advance in solid columns of fours, each section a unit. It was wonderful—that slow advance. Not a waver, not a break, through the storm of shell the Legion marched forward. Officers in advance with the commandant at their head; it inspired us all to courage and calmness. We met the fleeing *tirailleurs* and our officers tried to

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turn them back. I saw our commandant, wrath written all over his face, deliberately kick one Arab to make him halt in his flight. Shells were bursting everywhere. One lost his personal feelings. He simply became a unit — a machine.'

Changing into single file and quickening their pace into a rapid trot, the Legionnaires crossed a clearing and charged straight into the mouth of the horseshoe.

A heavy stream of lead from machine guns and rifles caught them from in front and raked them from the sides. With terrifying precision and a whining, tearing sound, shrapnel shells burst overhead, but the line never faltered. Whole sections fell as if mowed down by one sweep of a giant scythe, but others leaped forward into their places.

Men pitched forward into graves freshly dug by bursting shells, to be immediately covered deep with earth by a fresh explosion. A veritable death-trap seemed to have been laid for the Legion, but each man who went down fell facing forward. At points in the line the stream of lead was so thick that falling men were turned over and over and rolled along the ground like dead leaves before a late autumn wind. Somehow or other a few men lived to get through it and reached the barbed-wire belts; the wire-cutters were lost or thrown away, but with butts of rifles passages were pounded through, and small isolated groups of Legionnaires leaped into the trenches and fought there with bayonets. But they were too few in number to carry the *fortin*, and died fighting against overwhelming numbers.

The companies under Captains Junod and Bernard, leading the assault, were virtually annihilated. Just before the charge, Captain Junod addressed his men, saying: '*Mes enfants, nous allons à une mort certaine, mais nous allons tâcher de mourir en braves. En avant!*' ('My children, we are going to certain death, but we are going to try to die like brave men. Forward!')

Captain Bernard, a Dane, was the first officer killed. Mortally wounded just as he reached the woods, he propped himself up

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against a tree, called out '*Gradés à moi!*' ('Non-coms to me!') gave his last instructions, and shook hands with many of his men as they filed by.

Both the battalion chiefs, Commandants Burel and Decleve, and Captain Junod were killed as they reached the barbed-wire entanglements. Junod was riddled with bullets, and fell shouting, '*En avant, mes enfants! À la mort!*' ('Forward, my children! To death!')

Not an officer who went into the attack came back whole.

Henry Farnsworth fell at the edge of the clearing, his spine broken by a bullet. Sukuna dropped beside him, and dug a little trench, but, before he could get his friend into it, a second bullet passed through Farnsworth's throat, killing him. Sukuna swore his native oath of vengeance, and advanced on the Germans, only to fall in his turn with his thigh smashed by a bullet. Not far away was killed Samuel Gache, of Buenos Ayres, a graduate of Edinburgh University who joined the Legion on July 1, 1915, and arrived at the front just in time for the attack.

A young Portuguese volunteer, Raphaël de Carvalho, son of the famous writer, carried away by his enthusiasm reached the enemy entanglements at the very far end of the horseshoe and was killed there, his body hanging on the wires. Jury, the veteran Legionnaire of the old American squad in Champagne and Artois, was killed, but Corporal Didier, just out of hospital, passed through the charge unhurt.

Dr. David E. Wheeler got well into the Horseshoe Wood, where the calf of his leg was torn away by an explosive bullet. Wheeler dropped and bound up his own wound, then turned his attention to his wounded comrades scattered thickly around him. He always carried with him a first-aid kit, and was able to ease the agony of some of the more terribly hit Legionnaires by administering morphine injections with a hypodermic needle. Among those he helped was his English friend, John Elkington, whose right leg was smashed by dum-dum bullets. After ex-

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hausting the contents of his kit, Wheeler crawled painfully back to a dressing-post, carrying with him a desperately wounded man whose only chance of life was speedy attention.

Depositing his comrade at the first-aid station, which was already overflowing with wounded, Wheeler continued on toward the rear. A battalion of Senegalese advancing to the attack came along, and met Wheeler in a narrow *boyau*. The American was bloody and muddy; he had thrown away his greatcoat, and his jacket was not the regulation one of the Legion; he could speak little French. The Senegalese, convinced that he was a German spy trying to escape, were about to execute him then and there when a French officer arrived. After some discussion the officer realized that Wheeler was really a Legionnaire, and sent him on rearward. Stretcher-bearers finally picked him up, and he was sent first to a military ambulance at Châlons-sur-Marne, then to the American Hospital at Neuilly, where his wife was a nurse.

Brooke Bonnell's leg was almost severed near the hip by machine-gun bullets. It was related of him that he picked up two abandoned rifles, and using them as crutches made his way back to the dressing-post, where he fainted. The surgeons immediately amputated the leg.

Daniel William Thorin, of Canton, South Dakota, who had volunteered in the Legion on June 29, 1915, arrived at the front from the training camp at La Valbonne, just in time to take part in the battle. Paul Pavelka wrote as follows about how he conducted himself: 'Early in the attack Billy Thorin was struck in the head by a piece of shrapnel. He refused to go to the rear, but kept on. A few minutes later he was again hit, and toppled over. I knelt and looked at him, and he was stone dead.'

Thorin was not dead, however. He came to, crawled unaided to a dressing-post, and was sent to hospital with a big piece of his scalp missing and a hole in his shoulder.

Charles Trinkard was hit twice in the shoulder; the first bullet

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struck just over his heart, but was deflected by a safety razor he carried in his breast pocket, and tore a nasty wound upward. Trinkard was just back from a long stay in hospital with fever, and had been shifted from the Second to the First Foreign Regiment at La Valbonne.

Frank Whitmore and Christopher Charles were both wounded charging through the pines in the Horseshoe Wood, and Henry Walker fell with several bullets in the legs and thighs. John Brown was lifted high in the air by the explosion of a huge shell and hurled into a deep communication trench, the fall paralyzing him.

Edmond Genêt and a young Italian volunteer dashed forward so rapidly and with such ardor that they found themselves alone at the far upper end of the wood. They stopped, dropped flat behind a bush, and waited for their comrades to catch up with them. Dead tirailleurs from the previous charges were lying all around, and the German fire was dreadful. No Legionnaires arrived to continue the charge with Genêt and the little Italian: all their comrades had fallen killed or wounded.

Genêt said to his comrade: 'They are all dead here; the section must be behind us; shall we beat it back?'

The Italian nodded, and the two boys started cautiously back. Before they had gone far, the Italian fell; Genêt kept his head, and got safely back to the departure trenches, without ever understanding how he did it.

None of the men who came out of the attack untouched ever knew how they escaped death or injury. Facing the enemy fire was afterward likened to trying to go out in a heavy rainstorm without being hit by a single raindrop.

The survivors made their way back to the support trenches after nightfall. Out of the first two companies, of two hundred and fifty men each, to rush forward, thirty-one answered the roll-call. One *adjutant*, with his clothing riddled by bullets, was the only one left of the officers and non-coms.

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The Bois Sabot was taken from behind two days later by soldiers from two other divisions. In the *fortin* were found thirty-two machine-gun nests and block-houses, and several batteries of field cannon, mine-throwers, and trench mortars. On the parapet of a trench lay one of the Legionnaire cooks; he had asked to participate in the charge, and he was wounded just as he reached the enemy trench. Knowing he would be killed if discovered alive, for forty-eight hours he lay there and feigned death.

In a heap of bodies was found the chief doctor of the *Premier Étranger*. He had followed the first wave of assault to care for the wounded. The Germans captured him, and because he was carrying a revolver lined him up, shot him, and threw him out among the dead. The doctor was desperately wounded in two places, but his life was saved.

The great French offensive in Champagne was ended. An advance averaging four kilometres had been made all along the twenty-five-kilometre front attacked. The French High Command had hurled into the furnace four hundred and twenty battalions, with a loss of eighty thousand men killed, and one hundred thousand wounded and ill. Thanks to their formidable fortifications, the natural strength of their positions, and to the weather, which was wholly unfavorable to the attackers, the Germans had used only one hundred and ninety-two battalions, and with them checked at their second line of defense the French assaults. The only foothold gained in this second line by the French was at the Navarin Farm, due to the sacrifice of the *Premier Étranger* and the dashing courage of the *chasseurs* and the line infantrymen. The Germans still could say '*Gott mit uns*,' but their morale was sadly shaken: they had lost twenty-three thousand prisoners, one hundred and fifty guns with much material, tens of thousands of men killed and wounded, and their supposedly invincible army was forced back along a wide front.

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The two regiments of the Legion were decimated. Two commandants were among the killed, along with four captains and ten lieutenants. Among the latter was Lieutenant de Montesquiou de Fézensac, killed the 25th as he led the Americans' company forward. Educated to be an officer, he had left the French Army after the Dreyfus affair, when a notoriously bad Minister of War attempted to spy upon the political opinions and affiliations of the officers. A descendant of the famous poet and general Montesquiou-Fézensac, he became a writer and one of the leaders of the Royalist party in France. Well along in years at the outbreak of war, de Montesquiou de Fézensac volunteered, and was assigned as officer to the Foreign Legion.

Another man of note among the killed was Sergeant Ferdinand Vandamme. Examination of his papers discovered that in reality his name was Delpech, and that he was a son of a French Deputy. Refused by the French Army because of partial deafness and facial paralysis, Delpech posed as a Belgian engineer, and managed to get into the Legion, where he became a sergeant.

Sergeant Karaman Khan Nazare Aga, a Persian Prince and son of the Minister of Persia in Paris, was among the wounded. He had volunteered in August, 1914, and was with the Americans at Toulouse.

Both regiments of the Legion were cited in French Army Orders:

Deuxième Régiment de Marche du Deuxième Étranger:

September 25, 1915, threw itself forward to the assault of the enemy positions with a superb dash and spirit, taking many prisoners and capturing numerous machineguns.

Deuxième Régiment de Marche du Premier Étranger:

During the operations from September 20 to October 17, 1915, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, has given proof of the finest qualities of courage, of spirit, and of endurance. September 28,

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with an admirable spirit of sacrifice, rushed forward to the assault of a position which it was necessary to take at any price, and, despite the extremely violent fire of the enemy machineguns, arrived into the German trenches.

The flag of the *Deuxième Étranger* was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*, and a second palm added to that of the *Premier Étranger*.

Dr. David Wheeler was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*, with the following citation in Army Orders:

Although wounded himself September 28, 1915, with the very greatest calm he carried under a violent musket fire one of his grievously wounded comrades.

Another citation accompanying the *Croix de Guerre* read:

Marius Rocle, an excellent and courageous soldier; September 28, 1915, he offered spontaneously to take part in a patrol sent out under a violent fire to reconnoitre the German trenches.

Frank Musgrave received the *Croix de Guerre*: his citation recalled his courage and his *sang-froid* in Artois on May 9 and June 16, and the part he took in the patrol and charge of September 28. George Delpuech was awarded the same decoration, for having captured single-handed five Germans while acting as liaison agent on September 25, and it was given Fred Landreaux because of the brave part he played in the assault on the Wagram trenches.

The French '*Journal Officiel*' published the following citation:

The *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre* are conferred upon John Ford Elkington, Légionnaire in Company B 3 of the First Foreign Regiment: Although fifty years old, has given proof during the campaign of a remarkable courage and ardor, giving to every one the best example. He was gravely wounded September 28, 1915, rushing forward to the assault of the enemy trenches. He has lost the use of his right leg.

This citation came to the attention of King George of Eng-

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land, and shortly afterwards the 'London Gazette' printed the following official notice:

The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the reinstatement of John Ford Elkington in the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment with his previous seniority, in consequence of his gallant conduct while serving in the ranks of the Foreign Legion of the French Army. He was accordingly reappointed Lieutenant-Colonel in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, with seniority from 6th April, 1910, and to count service in the rank towards retirement on retired pay as from 14th February, 1914.

Thus was brought to light one of the finest stories of the war. Elkington entered the British Army as a subaltern when nineteen years old. After thirty years' service, during which he fought in the Transvaal and other Colonial campaigns, he came to France in August, 1914, in command of the same regiment he had joined as a youth.

During the first terrible weeks he did brilliant work, but at a crucial moment he gave a wrong order, was court-martialled, and the 'London Gazette' had the following War Office announcement:

Royal Warwickshire Regiment. — Lieutenant-Colonel John F. Elkington is cashiered by sentence of a general court-martial. Dated September 14, 1914.

Colonel Elkington said while in hospital:

'About a fortnight after the notice appeared in the papers I was in the ranks of the Foreign Legion. I joined under my own name; it would not have done to take another man's name. Many of the men in the Legion wore medals — medals of all the wars for the last twenty years. I could not wear mine even if I had wanted to — I was cashiered, and had no right to them any longer.

'I was recognized only once. We were marching in the Champagne country, and had just stopped to drink at a stream when

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a military motor went by. Some one in the car called out, "Hullo, Elkington," and I was afraid that I would be given away. It was the only voice from the past that came to me, and a few minutes afterwards I was stepping it out heel and toe along the dusty road, a private in the Legion.

'There was an American with me called Wheeler, a famous surgeon. He came over and joined the French Red Cross. He had tired of that, and joined the Legion. I met him first marching up to the front. I thought he was a tramp, and I expect he thought I was one. When we got to Lyon, I went down to have a meal in the big hotel. There I saw the American sitting over a big dinner and he saw me. From that time on we were friends. We saw that neither was a tramp. We marched together, ate together, and became great pals. He was a fine chap and did not know what fear was, and helped to make it a lot easier for me.

'During the first night of the Champagne attack, Wheeler showed his coolness. There was a false cry for us to charge, and the Third Company, in which we were, started forward with fixed bayonets. The commandant of the battalion, seeing the mistake, jumped in front of the advancing and excited men and tried to check them. One of the sergeants of the Third helped him and Wheeler, with more *sang-froid* than the rest, also helped him. The check succeeded, and the commandant took Wheeler's name. The commandant met a soldier's death directly in front of Wheeler during our attack on the 28th.

'Wheeler and I went into the charge together and fell together, both shot in the leg. He gave me first aid, and looking at my leg said: "Old fellow, they will have to take that off." Then he fainted across my leg and hurt me like the devil. But he saved my life.'

Another English volunteer badly wounded on September 28 was Ralph Hadley. Hadley was living at San Diego, California, when the war started. He returned to England, and in Novem-

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ber enlisted in the British Army. He was sent to a training camp at Dover, and after months there despaired of ever getting to the front in France, so deserted in April, 1915, crossed the Channel, and enlisted in the Foreign Legion.

While Hadley was in the hospital recovering from his wound, the British Government discovered his whereabouts, reclaimed him from the French military authorities, took him back to England, and court-martialled him on the charge of desertion. He was acquitted and felicitated for his brave spirit by his judges, and was sent back to France with an English regiment. He later contracted tuberculosis in the damp and muddy Flanders trenches, and was forced to enter a sanatorium.

Ralph Hadley's brother, Ernest, was in business in Paris in August, 1914, and was one of the leading members of the British Volunteer Corps which entered the Foreign Legion. He was badly wounded by shell-splinters during a bombardment of the trenches held by the *Deuxième Étranger* near Craonnelle in November, 1914, and after months in hospitals was invalided out of the service with the use of one hand permanently lost.

3

Among the Legionnaires injured during the Champagne battle was John Paul Du Bois, of San Francisco. He was badly bitten in the shoulder by an enraged horse, and was sent away to the hospital. From there he got in touch with the parents of the Count de Montesquiou de Fézensac, told them he had been the intimate friend of that officer and had seen him killed, and induced them to give him money.

Du Bois was the only real 'man of mystery' among the Americans. He gave his calling as that of bartender, but he was a man of far more than ordinary intelligence and education. It was whispered that he was a graduate of Leland Stanford University; he had a wide fund of knowledge, was an accomplished

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musician, and often entertained his comrades at the piano when the occasion presented itself.

Du Bois was an avowed anarchist and in constant correspondence with Emma Goldman and other notorious leaders of that party. An open enemy to all authority and discipline, he often had trouble with his officers. At Craonnelle he struck his captain; he was court-martialled, and the death penalty was demanded against him. He defended himself so cleverly that he got off with a sentence of only five years in the penitentiary battalion; in addition, the sentence was suspended, and he was sent back to the trenches and given chance to clear his record: a citation in Army Orders for bravery would automatically wipe out the punishment.

In October, a regular system of leaves of absence was instituted throughout the French Army: each soldier was to have eight days' *permission* every three months, to spend with his family or friends. The soldiers were granted these leaves in rotation, so many men of each company at a time.

Almost the first American Legionnaire to get a leave of absence was Edward Morlae. He came to Paris shortly after the end of the Champagne battle, changed his uniform for civilian clothes, had his passport put in order, hastened across the French border into Spain, and at Gibraltar took a boat for America. He was officially declared a deserter, and posted as such at the *dépôt* of the Foreign Legion.

When he landed in the United States, Morlae went immediately to Boston, and called at the office of the 'Atlantic Monthly.' Alan Seeger had been contributing poetry to that magazine, and Morlae introduced himself to Mr. Ellery Sedgwick, the editor, as a comrade of Seeger's. He exhibited medals he claimed to have won in France, and told such thrilling tales of his experiences there that articles were written in the 'Atlantic Monthly's' office and published under Morlae's name.

When the first of the deserter's articles appeared, in which he

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described the Foreign Legion as a conglomeration of outcasts, rascals, murderers, and thieves, there was great indignation among the American Legionnaires. They had been glad to get rid of Morlae, and considered his desertion something for him to settle with his own conscience. They objected to their corps being slandered and vilified, however, and numerous letters of protest, including a formal statement from Colonel Metz, commander of the Legion's *dépôt*, that Morlae was a deserter and had not been decorated with the *Médaille Militaire*, were sent to Mr. Sedgwick.

Chapter VII

THE SECOND WINTER IN THE TRENCHES

GENERAL DE CASTELNAU had announced the end of the French offensive in Champagne, after the capture of Navarin Farm, but there was still plenty of fighting to be done there. The new front, won at such bitter cost, must be conserved, and the kinks in the line straightened out. The Germans were reacting vigorously, with destructive bombardments and continual counter-attacks by their infantry.

The Legion took its full part in the fighting. After the fatal charge in the Bois Sabot, the remnants of the two regiments were pulled back into the battered reserve trenches, and the companies and battalions re-formed. The Legionnaires camped in the shell-beaten woods, sheltering themselves in holes often deep with water and mud, over which they put brushwood and old tent covers in an attempt to keep out the rain.

William Dugan, Paul Pavelka, and Frank Musgrave made for themselves by hard labor a particularly dry and comfortable shelter. 'Lucky' Frank had a premonition, which he imparted to his two comrades; they deserted their shelter at dark, and slept out in the open under the pines. The next morning they found the shelter totally demolished by a huge shell which had fallen upon it during the night. Their packs and other effects left in the shelter were also destroyed.

Fred Zinn was hit in the side by a shell-splinter, and at first it was thought that his lung was pierced. Examination at the hospital showed the missile had been stopped by two ribs, which were broken.

The men who had been killed during the great charges were

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buried as rapidly as possible, a sad and gruesome task for the survivors. Officers, non-coms, and privates were laid together in great common graves, with all their names on one large cross. The Legionnaires who had been slain in the Bois Sabot were all interred near where they fell, but as soon as it became possible, Mr. William Farnsworth, father of the heroic Henry, had built on the crest of the hill above Souain a beautiful cemetery, one of the finest in France, to which the bones of his son and his son's comrades were transferred. On a splendid monument above the crypt are engraved the names of Captain Édouard Junot, Henry Weston Farnsworth, and their fellow Legionnaires from many lands.

On October 7, the Legionnaires occupied the dangerous trenches in the Bois des Vandales. A German attack was expected at any moment, and the men kept on the *qui-vive*. Joseph Lydon lay with a detail of men between the lines at night on listening-post. The Germans started a heavy bombardment of the position, and all the Legionnaires except Lydon crawled back to shelter.

A shell exploded near by, and rolled Lydon over. A huge piece of the shell-casing cut his right foot neatly away at the ankle.

'I felt a sharp pain in my left foot where small bits of the shell lodged,' Lydon related afterwards, 'but I did not know that my right foot was gone until I tried to stand up. I never saw that foot again. I left it on the battlefield and crawled back to a dressing-post.'

Lydon was awarded the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre* — the first American volunteer to receive the former decoration — and was given a beautiful citation in French Army Orders, which called him an 'excellent soldier,' and said:

At an advanced post outlook he had his foot cut to pieces by a shell-splinter. He repressed every sigh, although he was suffering intense pain. To an officer who encouraged him he answered: 'It is nothing, my Captain; it is for France.'

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The official '*Historique du Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère*,' in the only passage devoted to American volunteers, says:

Lydon is an American. He is one of those who came to fight in France at the very beginning of the war: he had vaguely heard Lafayette spoken of.

He scarcely knows how to express himself in French and is nothing of the intellectual like Alan Seeger or the aristocrat like Kenneth Weeks. He is a simple fellow, of a jovial humor, who laughs easily.

He knows enough French, however, to say with good humor to his comrade Genêt (killed later in the Aviation) who pities him for having a foot cut off and other wounds: '*On s'était engagé pour mourir pour la France; je n'ai qu'un pied de moins. Vive la France!*' ('We enlisted to die for France; I have only one foot less. Long live France!')

The German attack did not materialize, and after forty-eight hours in first line, the Legionnaires left the Vandals' Trenches and went into reserve, in the remains of the former German positions in the Bois Guillaume and the Bois des Bouleaux.

The Legion was by now so reduced in strength that all sorts of rumors were current in the ranks as to what was going to be done with it. Some said that it was going to be dissolved, and its members liberated, or sent into French line regiments; others, that it was going to be sent to Morocco. The French War Ministry did entertain the latter idea for a time.

The Americans were notified that they could transfer to a French line regiment, or remain in the Legion, at their choice. A number of them decided to change to the One Hundred and Seventieth Line Infantry Regiment — *les Hirondelles de la Mort* ('the Swallows of Death'), which had been fighting alongside the Legion since the beginning of the Champagne battle. Alan Seeger wrote of the transfer:

'Most of the other Americans have taken advantage of the permission to pass into a regular French regiment. There is much to be said for their decision, but I have remained true to

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the Legion, where I am content and have good comrades. I have a pride particularly in the Moroccan Division, whereof we are the first brigade. Those who march with the Zouaves and the Algerian *tirailleurs* are sure to be where there is most honor.'

On October 17, the Legion was relieved in the trenches by the One Hundred and Seventieth Line Regiment, and made an all-night march back^{ly} toward the rear, about which Genêt wrote:

'So relieved and glad were we that our time in Champagne was at last over that we sang and whistled almost the entire march, tired as we were. Toward dawn we camped in a wood a few kilometres south of a town called Cuperly. We were there three days getting fixed up. All had a good hot bath, washed their clothes and cleaned everything up. Late in the afternoon of the 20th the *Division Marocaine* entrained at a small place east of Châlons-sur-Marne and Champagne and its horrors were left gladly behind.'

2

A comic element of relief from the strain of battle was afforded the American volunteers in the late fall of 1915. They had had no news of Harry Collins since that ex-sailor had been sent away to Northern Africa, and had almost forgotten his existence.

Suddenly there came a message from Collins, in the form of a two-column letter printed under huge headlines in the November 30, 1915, Paris edition of the 'New York Herald.'

After several introductory paragraphs, the writer suggested that he introduce himself, as follows:

'I am Harry Cushing Collins, the American boy from Lowell, Massachusetts, who, at the outbreak of this terrible conflagration which is devastating the whole of Europe, first aided in the formation of a body of mounted troops for scouting purposes, which was put at the disposition of the English Government,



AMERICAN LEGIONNAIRES IN CHAMPAGNE

*Left to right: Elov Nilson, Bob Scanlon, Marius Rocle, Dennis Dowd
Ferdinand Capdevielle, David King*



AMERICAN FIGHTERS WHO CHANGED FROM THE FOREIGN LEGION TO THE 170TH LINE INFANTRY IN OCTOBER, 1915

*Left to right, back row: Paul Pavelka, Jack Cardonnier, Frank Musgrave, Bob Scanlon
Front row: William E. Dugan, Jr., Eugene Jacob, Michael Steinfels, Marius Rocle,
Charles Hoffecker, Walter K. Appleton, Jr.*

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and who then organized the "American Volunteer Corps," which, being incorporated into the *Légion Étrangère* (Foreign Legion) of the French Army, has rendered many valuable services to our sister republic, France.

'I, setting the example, contracted an engagement myself in the Legion for the duration of the war, and have, up to a few weeks ago, been fighting at different points along the front in France and Belgium.'

The boy-hero went on to tell that as a result of his vast and varied experience in the fighting line, the French Government suggested that he take a body of untried recruits out to the rescue of invaded Serbia.

'In spite of my natural reluctance to leave all my American comrades, I consented to this proposition,' continued Collins. Embarking at the bustling port of Marseilles, he first went to Saïda with his detachment, and after a few days there, 'we steamed through the shimmering opal-blue waters of the Mediterranean toward the distant, mysterious Orient.'

As soon as they landed, Collins led his raw, untried men straight into battle. They protested at first at going immediately under fire, but Collins explained to them that France was bestowing great honor upon them, and they attacked with fury, and drove back the combined armies of Germany, Austria, and treacherous Bulgaria many miles.

'I must close this letter now,' wrote the doughty warrior, 'as a wounded messenger has just staggered into my dugout and declared that the fighting was swinging around in my direction.'

The letter then went on for another good half-column, containing, among other gems:

'I simply ask you to publish this letter, so that my American comrades in France will know my address.... At present I am the only American fighting in the Balkans, but if a plan I have worked out in conjunction with the Serbian Recruitment staff succeeds, this will not be the case in the near future.... For the

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present I can't divulge any details of this plan, but the American as well as the French public can rest assured it is for the greater glory and success of our beloved sister republic, France.'

The American Legionnaires laughed long and loud over the Collins letter, but the 'Herald' of December 1, 1915, contained a stirring editorial about it, with numerous quotations from the Holy Scriptures.

3

What was left of the two marching regiments of the Legion after the Champagne battle went into winter quarters in villages near Compiègne. The entire army corps to which the Moroccan Division belonged was passed in review on October 26 by King George V of England, the Prince of Wales, Generals Joffre and Kitchener, Président Poincaré, and other dignitaries. Genêt said of the review:

'It was inspiring to see that vast review of the Colonial troops, Zouaves, *tirailleurs*, our noble Legion, and the cavalry. When we were passing the King and the President I had the fine fortune to be on the very inside file so that my view of them was unobstructed. Our regimental colors received the *Croix de Guerre* that day for our bravery in the fighting in Champagne. It certainly was thrilling to hear the bands playing "God save the King" and the "Marseillaise" and to see so many thousands of bayonets flashing in the sunlight that it looked like a vast sea of silver points.'

There were not enough men available to rebuild two full regiments, so on November 11, 1915, the marching regiments of the *Premier* and *Deuxième Étranger* were merged into one regiment, three battalions strong, which was called the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère*. The new unit retained the flag of the *Deuxième Régiment de Marche du Premier Étranger*, and inherited the palm from the *Croix de Guerre* of the flag of the

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Deuxième Étranger, which flag was placed in the great War Museum at the Hôtel des Invalides in Paris.

Among the reënforcements that arrived to fill out the ranks was a detachment of veteran Legionnaires fresh from the campaign in Tonkin. One of these men who had been fighting rebels and yellow fever in that far-away corner of Asia was an American, Corporal Joseph Phillips, of Chicago. Phillips was an ex-sergeant in the United States Army, with which he had served a term of enlistment in the Philippines, and he was just beginning his sixth year as a Legionnaire.

The Legion changed its garb, for the fourth time since August, 1914. Shortly after it first arrived at the front, dark-blue overalls had been issued, to wear over the red trousers which were such a plain target for the enemy. Shortly before the Champagne offensive, the regulation horizon-blue uniforms of the French line regiments were given to the Legionnaires. Now they donned the khaki greatcoats, tunics, and trousers in which the various Colonial corps were already attired.

The regiment changed quarters, and marched to the cold, dismal town of Crèvecœur, in the Oise Department. There was much drilling and practice in the latest methods of making war, as learned from the battles of 1915. The life was trying to the hardened Legionnaires, and seldom enlivened by amusement. Genêt wrote of one entertaining episode:

‘Let me tell you a funny incident which occurred last week during some sham military manœuvres of the regiment. The commandant of our battalion is very jolly and given to making funny remarks now and then. In looks he reminds me of our pictured Santa Claus, short, round, and jolly, with flowing white whiskers covering his shirt-front. During a sham attack he suddenly pretended that he had been hit and killed by a bursting shell. “*Je suis mort, je suis mort!*” he cried and every one laughed.

‘A little later two soldiers in the same spirit of amusement de-

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clared they too were dead — just to get out of some work which had to be done at the moment. The commandant glared at them for a minute. “*Vous êtes morts?*” he questioned; “*bon, je suis chef des morts, allez avec moi!*” They followed him.’

The Americans who had remained with the Legion felicitated themselves when they received news from their comrades who had transferred to the One Hundred and Seventieth — ‘still in the same desolate Champagne sector; hard work at night, guard at the outposts, bombardment, three already wounded and evacuated.’ They at least were tranquil for the winter, and warmly quartered in a big town where they could buy all sorts of comforts. ‘*C’est la bonne vie,*’ Seeger wrote.

Seeger fell ill with bronchitis at the end of January. A year and a half of constant effort at the front had worn him out, and he was forced to enter the hospital. ‘I do not mind taking a rest in bed, while we are out of the fighting line,’ he said.

February 20, 1916, the Legionnaires went into the trenches in the Marest-sur-Matz sector. Things were quiet there, but they had to be on the alert, because the enemy was strongly entrenched on the Plémont and other heights opposite their line. The battalions alternated between the front-line trenches and periods of repose at a camp along a small stream in a wood, where they constructed a regular little Swiss village.

The different regiments of the Moroccan Division got up football-teams, and played against each other when at repose. Chatkoff, who had missed the Champagne attack because he was in the hospital with fever and had just rejoined his regiment, Christopher Charles, whose wound had healed nicely, and Joseph Phillips were the American members of the Legion’s team. On one occasion, when the Legion was playing against the Zouaves, the Germans started a sudden bombardment with heavy guns. The game came to an immediate finish, as spectators and players scrambled for shelter in dugouts.

The Czar of Russia bestowed the Cross of Saint George on

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the flag of the Legion, because of the corps' heroism in Champagne, and the medal was pinned on the banner at a review held behind the lines early in March.

A German aeroplane bombarded the camp on May 18; one of the bombs killed Corporal Joseph Collett, of New York, and wounded seven men. Collett was one of the most popular men in the Legion; he was of Swiss origin, but a naturalized American citizen, and in civilian life was an electrical engineer. He had volunteered to fight for France in August, 1914, together with his twin brother Marcel. The latter was asleep in a dugout when the fatal bomb exploded, and rushed to his brother's side in time to receive his dying words.

Alan Seeger had just returned from the hospital, and he and Marcel Collett asked for and obtained permission to accompany all the patrols between the lines, in an effort to avenge Joseph's death. On one patrol Seeger left his visiting-card on the enemy's barbed-wire belt.

A Memorial Day ceremony was organized in Paris, to take place by the statue of Washington and Lafayette at the Place des États-Unis, in honor of the American volunteers killed fighting for France in the Foreign Legion. At the suggestion of Paul Rockwell, Alan Seeger was asked to write a poem for the occasion, which he was to come to Paris and read during the ceremony.

Memorial Day came, and the ceremony was held, but Seeger did not appear to read his poem, the beautiful ode 'In Memory of the American Volunteers Fallen for France.'

'What a bitter disappointment!' wrote Seeger. 'After having worked feverishly on my poem and finished it, in spite of work and other duty, in the space of two days, behold the 29th comes and the 30th, and no *permission* arrives. It would have been such an honor and pleasure to have read my verses there in Paris.'

It was learned that a careless functionary at the French

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who had promised to arrange for Seeger's leave to come to Paris, had confused Memorial Day with America's national holiday, and had asked that the poet be given a *permission* on July 4.

But Alan Seeger had a rendezvous for that day, which he could not fail to keep.

Chapter VIII

AT LA VALBONNE

IN THE mean while, new volunteers, and veterans who had come from the hospitals after wounds received at the front had healed, were being drilled at the Legion's big training camp at La Valbonne. The situation of the place was picturesque. The town of La Valbonne nestled at the foot of an almost perpendicular semi-circular chain of hills, while away from the camp stretched for miles a level valley, well adapted to military manœuvres. In the distance could be seen on clear days the snow-capped peaks of the Alps.

The camp sprawled out over many acres. The buildings were one-storied structures of white-cemented brick and stone, or hastily erected shacks of rude planking, all arranged in rows, wide apart. Each building accommodated one section of sixty men. The floors were usually the hard earth, but always swept scrupulously clean. In the centre of each building was a huge stove, which heated the quarters fairly well. Around the walls were arranged sloping platforms of boards, on which the men slept. Each man was provided with a mattress and blankets, which during the day were kept rolled up. Above each man's sleeping-space was a shelf for personal articles; the rifles were ranged in racks near the doors.

Near the main entrance to the camp grounds was a *Foyer du Soldat*, a sort of soldiers' club, where the men were encouraged to pass their leisure hours instead of frequenting the cheap cafés which abounded just outside the camp confines. In the *Foyer* was a reading-room, well supplied with books and periodicals, and a larger room, in which were many chairs and benches,

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and at one end of which was a raised platform and a piano. There were many pianists among the Legionnaires, some of them quite gifted, and they often played while hot coffee or tea was served to their comrades.

In addition to the Legionnaires, there were at the camp many battalions of Colonial infantrymen — the professional fighters of France, Frenchmen who like the soldier's life and, after completing their compulsory term of military training, volunteer for service in the Colonies. A short distance from the camp proper was a training school for machine-gun operators. The machine gun was daily becoming a more important arm of the French Army; nine hundred new ones were being sent to the front monthly, and at the school were men from all branches of the infantry — Legionnaires, Alpine *chasseurs*, line infantrymen, Colonials, Zouaves, *tirailleurs*, and others.

La Valbonne was essentially a troop town. The civilians living there were almost all *mercantis*, engaged in exploiting the soldiers as greedily as possible, selling at high prices food and drink and the necessities and small luxuries of army life. The part of the town lying across the railroad from the camp was entirely given over to cafés, cheap restaurants, tobacco shops, and general stores. In the square around the town hall were many little canvas sheltered booths, which also catered to the soldiers, and displayed their wares only in the evening, during the hours of freedom of the men from the camp.

The officers at the camp were as a rule not up to the standard of those who commanded the Legionnaires at the front. Many of them, by means of intrigue or influence, had been able to keep away from the firing line, and had little sympathy for either the recruits or the men who had been wounded. Kiffin Rockwell, who spent a month at La Valbonne just before he transferred to the Aviation, wrote a good account of the life there:

‘This is only thirty kilometres from Lyon. It is a regular

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military camp right out in the country. The sleeping-quarters are good and there is plenty of fresh air, trees and grass. The room I am in is very clean, and I have a sleeping-bag, clean blanket and all.

'I have really not done anything since I arrived here and this is not a bad place, but it is "in the air" for every one to be demoralized — officers and men — and it is nothing but grumbling and yelling from morning to night....

'I will tell you a few incidents that happened recently:

'Two days ago the commandant passed a review of the men proposed for the *réforme*. Nearly all of them had been wounded, the only one not was Krogh, who is proposed owing to heart trouble. All of the men had been in the trenches all winter. Because these men were going to get out of it through the doctors, the commandant was sore as hell. He lined them up — some of them could hardly walk — and cursed them out. He told them they were not worth a damn, that they disgraced the Legion, and that they only came here for *la gamelle*. Now, we have heard that from sergeants and such all the time. But for a commandant to tell men who have ruined themselves for life out of a love for France and the principles she is fighting for, I think it is going a little too far....

'Now, since I have been here, there has been no one that has said a word out of the way to me. Yet I see these things every day and never know when my turn will come. And it is such a disgrace to France for such things to happen that I wish something could be done to stop it.'

Another letter said:

'Well, I am still at La Valbonne doing the same thing each day — drilling — which grows monotonous.... I am now planning to go to the Dardanelles with the next detachment. I think the Legion there is pretty good, as I have heard fine reports of their actions.... Just came in this morning from another twenty-four hours of work and no sleep in the trenches. That is

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a better idea than the kind of drilling we had last fall, but I get tired of it, after having had the seven months of the real thing.

‘None of my letters nowadays are anything but complaints, and you know the kind of spirit I was in when I came back.’

Americans who were at La Valbonne late in 1915 or the first few months of 1916 included Sergeant Edgar Bouligny, Frank Whitmore, Wilfred Michaud, Jack Casey, Tony Paullet, Billy Thorin, Charles Trinkard and Fred Zinn; all of them had recovered more or less from their wounds of the Champagne battle, and were awaiting their turn to go back to the front.

There were also several recent volunteers: Arthur Barry and Henry L. Claude, both from Boston, Massachusetts; Gerald Brandon, from the United States in general; Alfred Gerl Bustillos, a Greek-American from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Fred Boulanger, of San Francisco, California; Frank Clair, of Columbus, Ohio; Jack Moyet, a seventeen-year-old lad who gave Mobile, Alabama, as his address; Ivan Finney Nock, of Baltimore, Maryland; James Paul Demetre, of St. Louis, Missouri, popular among his comrades as Jimmie Paul; Marius Philippe, of San Francisco, and C. Dulcie, of Detroit, Michigan.

There were also Oscar Mouvet, of Brooklyn, New York, a professional dancer and the son of a Belgian who had served both in the Foreign Legion and the United States Navy; a comical bow-legged little Negro, James Bracy, of Portsmouth, Virginia, and a weak-minded youth, Robert Whidby, of Mobile, Alabama.

Arthur Barry was by trade a plasterer, stock-yards hand, and sailor; by disposition, a rover. When he was barely fifteen years old he quarreled with his father, ran away from home, and at Halifax, Nova Scotia, joined a Canadian regiment of cavalry. A few months later his father learned where he was and bought his discharge. The runaway returned home, but did not remain there long. Eager for a life of adventure, young Barry enlisted

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in the United States Navy and spent three years as a blue-jacket on board the battleship *Dakota*.

Discharged from the Navy in San Francisco, Barry squandered his savings and the money given him for transportation home. Then, with some comrades, he walked out to the borax mines in Death Valley, with the intention of becoming a miner. Death Valley was too arid a territory for so ardent a lover of salt water and sea breezes, however, so he didn't tarry there long. In easy stages, by the 'riding the rods' method, Barry returned to New England, and settled down to work in his home city, varying the monotony of Boston by occasional 'longshore cruises on sailing vessels.

In January, 1916, Barry decided to cross the Atlantic and get into the European war. He shipped out of Boston as a night watchman on a horse-boat, with his friend, Henry Claude.

Claude, too, had worn the United States uniform, both in the Navy and in the Army. He had served for four years on the light battle cruiser *Montgomery*, followed by an enlistment as a gunner in Battery E, Third United States Field Artillery. He already had had a glimpse of the Great War as a sailor on a British hospital ship, on which he made several trips to the Dardanelles, Malta, and other ports.

Barry and Claude were entitled to a free passage back to Boston on the horse-boat and a small sum of money. The afternoon before their ship was to start back to America, they were wandering through the outlying streets of Bordeaux, at which port they had landed, and halted in front of a large barracks to gaze at the soldiers idling about the courtyard within. Presently they engaged in conversation with two French sergeants who had lived in America and spoke English. After some conversation, the Americans were asked inside to look around the barracks, and then were invited to share the sergeant's mess.

Favorably impressed by everything they saw and heard, the

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Americans asked during the meal if there was any chance of their joining the regiment.

The sergeants seemed considerably surprised by the question and replied: 'You cannot get into this regiment, but if you really wish to fight, you can join the Foreign Legion.'

'Lead us to it!' cried both Barry and Claude, and, conducted by the sergeants, they hastened along the darkening streets to the recruitment bureau. The bureau was just about to close when they arrived, and they were told to come back the following day, Sunday, February 13. They were exact at the rendezvous, were pronounced '*bon pour service*' by the Army doctors, and a few minutes later signed enlistments as Legionnaires for the duration of the war.

They returned to their boat, which was just about to sail, and told their astonished shipmates that they had joined the Legion, and then went to the captain for their pay. The captain was an Englishman; he paid the youths off in full, and praised them for preferring to brave the perils of war rather than recross the Atlantic and take up again the safe life of America.

Frank Clair and Robert Whidby both had served in the United States Army; the latter told several stories as to how he happened to join the Legion, the most probable one being that he was unhappily married and his wife had nagged him away from home. Whidby and James Bracy came to France on a horse-ship; the crossing was very rough, both were horribly seasick, and when they landed at Bordeaux swore they would never again set foot on a boat. They went to the American Consul at Bordeaux for aid; the Consul finally got tired of giving them money, and, as they could not find work and did not want to embark for America, he advised them to enlist in the Foreign Legion.

Bracy was a typical happy-go-lucky, ignorant Negro, an unconscious clown, and the butt of the jokes of the other Ameri-

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cans at La Valbonne. He did not like the tales told him of life and battles at the front, and began walking cross-legged and reporting at sick call every day. The doctor was at first taken in by the Negro's woe-begone appearance and his claim that he had rheumatism in his feet, and put him on the list of those exempt from service.

For several days Bracy had a fine time of it, idling around the camp and eating his fill, while the other men worked and drilled. One evening he was in the *Foyer du Soldat*, when one of the men seated himself at the piano and began playing American 'rags.' Bracy had difficulty in keeping still. Finally the pianist struck up 'On the Mississippi,' and the darky could stand it no longer. He climbed up on a table, and gave a first-class exhibition of old Virginia buck-and-wing dancing.

The Negro was so engrossed in 'shaking his feet,' and reveling in the delighted applause of his comrades, that he did not note the entrance of two officers and the doctor. The latter watched the dancer's performance with interest, and applauded loudly, but the next day Bracy was back in the ranks drilling with the other boys.

Ivan Nock was an unusually fine type of American youth. He had received military training with the Fifth Maryland National Guard Regiment, where he won a sharpshooter's medal, and was by profession a mining engineer. He held a responsible position in a silver mine in Peru, when the World War began.

'I was miserable every day I stayed out of it,' he told Paul Rockwell. 'My conscience reproached me that an able-bodied man was not taking his part in a struggle which is to decide the destinies of mankind for centuries to come. Finally I had to drop everything and come to France and fight.'

Volunteers from almost every nation kept arriving at La Valbonne. In Fred Zinn's squad of fourteen men, nine different flags were represented. A little Spanish lad who arrived at the

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camp the first week in January, 1916, was typical of the kind of men who were enlisting. He was the last of three brothers to volunteer for France against Germany. The eldest brother was killed in the trenches at the foot of Reims Mountain early in 1915. The second brother lost a hand during the storming of La Targette, May 9, 1915. The youngest had wanted to enlist at the outbreak of the war, but had promised his mother to wait until he was nineteen years old. When he reached that age, his family refused to give him money for railway fare to France, so he walked all the way from Madrid to Paris to enlist. Paul Rockwell met him at the Legion's recruitment bureau in Paris, where he had arrived weary from his long walk, on the day before Christmas of 1915, and found him again at La Valbonne two weeks later.

A distinguished volunteer was Colonel Angell, a brilliant Norwegian officer, who resigned his high command in his national army to join the Legion as a lieutenant. Colonel Angell had already been in France; in 1903 he taught the officers and men of the One Hundred and Fifty-Ninth French Line Infantry Regiment, stationed at Briançon, in the French Alps, how to use the ski. He had been official military observer for Norway during the Balkan Wars.

Lieutenant W. Peeters, a Norwegian volunteer who had drilled the Americans at Toulouse, was killed at La Valbonne in the spring of 1916 during hand-grenade practice. He was just out of the hospital after a grave wound received during the Champagne battle.

Brooke Bonnell was decorated with the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*, with a fine citation in Army Orders recalling his heroism in Champagne, and Henry Walker was awarded the same medals, with an excellent mention; both were invalided out of the French Army. David E. Wheeler was left lame from his wound, and was also invalided out of the service. He wanted to go to England, and applied to the Ameri-

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can Consulate-General in Paris to have his passport put in order.

'You have been fighting in the French Army, haven't you?' demanded a member of the Consular staff, in a disagreeable tone.

'I have,' replied Wheeler, 'and in fact, have just been discharged after a wound.'

The functionary grabbed Wheeler's passport away from him.

'You have no more right to this passport than if you were a Greek or a Russian or a Chinaman!' he informed the American fighting surgeon.

Wheeler went to England just the same, and, after much knocking at official doors there, got himself attached to a Canadian regiment as battalion surgeon. Within a few weeks he was back at the front in Northern France.

John Hopper, after being out of the Legion, engaged in the French counter-spy service. He accomplished many dangerous missions around Verdun and at other parts of the front, and caused to be shot numerous dangerous German spies. His twin brother, James Hopper, the short-story writer, came to France as a war correspondent.

Émil Dufour was left weakened by his wound, and was sent to work in a munitions factory near Paris. While he was convalescent from his wound, an American woman living in Paris had invited Dufour with some other soldiers to tea at her apartment. The tea was served by a very comely maid. Some minutes later, Dufour excused himself from the salon, went back to the kitchen, and talked to the maid. It was a case of 'love at first sight': a few weeks later, the maid left her place to marry the American volunteer.

2

Near the centre of the camp at La Valbonne stood the jail of the Legion. It was like the other buildings, except that there

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was always a guard at the door, and the windows were small, high up in the walls, and iron-barred.

Many of the American volunteers made acquaintance with the interior of the building. It was no disgrace, however, to be a prisoner. Small jail sentences were given for being late at roll-call, for returning late from a leave of absence, for getting drunk, or for indulging in a fistic bout with a comrade. Unless they were locked up on a serious charge, such as insubordination or attempted desertion, the prisoners went out for exercise with the other soldiers and ate the same food; the only drawback of a jail sentence was that one was deprived of the evening's freedom to leave camp.

The old system of punishment, in vogue in the African *dépôts* of the Legion, was abolished in France. Under it the man serving a few days' prison sentence was compelled to march up and down a distance of twenty-five metres with a seventy-five-pound pack on his back, for three hours every morning and three hours every afternoon, until he had served his time. Old Legionnaires said that more than one man had gone insane from the monotony and strain.

Jack Casey and Gerald Brandon were put in jail early in January, 1916, charged with assault on a corporal. The latter, a Swiss, had been drinking, got into a row with Brandon, and began knocking him about. Casey went to the rescue of his compatriot, and in the scrimmage which followed, the Swiss was slightly injured. A knife with red stains on it was found near the scene of the fray, and the corporal charged the Americans with having stabbed him.

The affair looked very serious for a while, but some of Casey's friends took up the defense of the two accused men. Mr. John R. Ernster, American Vice-Consul at Lyon — who, like his successor, Mr. J. E. Jones, was ever a true friend to the American Legionnaires — also visited La Valbonne several times and pleaded for them. It was found that the stains on the knife were

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jam, and not blood, and the Swiss corporal withdrew his charge. Brandon drilled with the Legion for a few weeks, then obtained his discharge without ever serving at the front.

Billy Thorin was almost a regular boarder at the jail. He was not long in hospital from his Champagne battle wounds, and was sent to La Valbonne in early December, 1915. The camp was deadly monotonous to Billy, but how he managed to liven things up he wrote in his own picturesque style:

‘The other night we went to a café called “L’Univers.” Two Spaniards told us the U.S.A. was no good and that the Americans could not fight. So just to show them that there was no ill feeling and that none of us American guys was afraid to fight, I cracked one between the eyes. That started it. We were four and they were five, but it didn’t make no odds to us. We went through them in good old style; they got assistance from two civilians, but they were no good with their dukes, so we laid them low as well.

‘They sent for patrols, but we had just warmed up then, and, as the gendarmes said, “Nothing but a ‘seventy-five’ could have stopped those four Americans.” We smashed up a few things, like chairs and windows, etc. Well, they got too many for us at last, but the gendarmes were good sports and told us they would help us right as much as they possibly could.

‘Their word was good. When we were taken up in front of the four-striper [commandant], the gendarmes told him that the other fellows started the trouble and that if we each paid fifteen francs the café would let it go at that. We have paid ten francs each already, but, believe me, I wouldn’t have missed that fight for a fifty-dollar bill. I will be sitting in a cell over Christmas, but what of it?’

Thorin was a born fighter. He was of Swedish parentage, and spent his childhood on a farm. But ‘there was too damned much religion in the family,’ Billy said; his mother belonged to one sect and his father to another, and they were continually quarrel-

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ling over which one was going to heaven. One brother survived the discussions, and grew up to be a missionary, but Daniel William left home at the age of fourteen years. He worked first for an uncle on a wheat ranch, but such peaceful occupations as following the plough or running a wheat thresher did not appeal to him for long. The roving blood of hardy Viking ancestors coursed madly in his veins, and called him to the sea. He reached the Pacific Coast, shipped as a cabin-boy on a tramp sailing vessel, and from that time on Billy followed the sea with fair regularity for fifteen years. There was no port of any consequence that he could not tell enough about to show that he had been there.

Like all sailors, however, Billy had his spells of being tired of ordinary seafaring. Once he enlisted as a marine on a Chinese gunboat and fought with desperate yellow pirates and opium runners.

At another time, he enlisted in the United States Army, and was stationed on the Mexican border in Southern California. He found that life very dull, so crossed the frontier, and joined Price and Mosby's band of soldiers of fortune which fought for first one Mexican pretender, then for another.

That campaign was almost Billy's finish. In a guerrilla battle with a band of revolutionists Billy and a comrade decided to investigate a small adobe hut which stood in the low brush near a road. Billy started around one side of the house, his mate around the other. When Billy came to the front of the house, the headless body of his comrade lay in the dust before the half-open door. Thorin 'saw red.' He put his hand on the door to push it open, and a Mexican lurking behind it cut the hand half off with a machete. Somehow or other, Billy killed the Mexican with his bare hands.

Then he heard firing, and stepped out of the hut. A bullet passed through his face, from cheek to cheek, and Billy started to run. Just as he reached the road a second bullet caught him

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through the thigh and Billy pitched forward unconscious into the dust. When he recovered consciousness, he was in the military hospital at Fort Roswell, New Mexico. Americans passing the scene of battle in an automobile had picked him up just in time, and hurried him across the border.

Billy bore the scars of that fight on his hand and cheeks after his recovery. When he had settled his little account with the United States military authorities, he emigrated to Australia with the intention of settling there. Although far from being an Adonis, he had a very winning way with the women, and as two Australian girls — both with equally strong claims on him — were claiming his hand in marriage before he had been on the island continent for many months, he embarked in June, 1914, on an Italian sailing vessel bound for Liverpool.

When the ship reached its destination, it was learned that the Great War had broken out. Billy at once announced his intention of going to France and joining the Foreign Legion, as he already knew that corps' reputation as a fighting body. The Italian sea captain offered to carry Thorin to Bordeaux, where the boat was calling for a cargo, and the offer was gladly accepted.

At Bordeaux, Thorin helped load the boat with a cargo for Chile, then went into a café with the captain, who proposed to drink to his success as a Legionnaire. One drink was followed by another, and when the would-be soldier recovered his senses he was far out on the ocean *en route* for South America.

Some weeks later, the ship sailed into the harbor of Africa. Before going ashore Billy gave the treacherous captain a thrashing that sent the shanghaier into the hospital and himself into a Chilean prison for two months.

After coming out of jail, Thorin had to wait around Africa for several months before he could get a boat back to France. He won the good graces of a German girl who was plying near the water front what Kipling calls the 'world's oldest profession,'

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and earned his board and keep by opening beer and throwing out rowdy customers for her.

Billy finally was able to get away from Chile and back to France, and enlisted in the Legion as soon as he arrived at Bordeaux. As he spoke no French and was of a fiery nature, he was continually misunderstanding and resenting with blows things said to him with no intention of angering him.

Thorin came to Paris on a convalescence leave of absence when he was discharged from the hospital after his Champagne wound. Mrs. Alice Weeks, mother of Kenneth Weeks, had taken an apartment in Paris after the death of her son and had thrown it open as headquarters for the American volunteers in the Legion. Thorin frequently lunched and dined with Mrs. Weeks while on leave, and it was remarked that when he was at table the maid, a homely, middle-aged Belgian woman, served very badly and gazed continually at the Legionnaire.

Billy came for dinner the night before he was to return to La Valbonne, and the maid asked if she might put up a lunch for him to eat in the train. She was told she might do so, and in the box she put a note which contained an ardent declaration of love. Billy was amused, and at the same time flattered, when he read the love-letter, and answered in kind. From then on the infatuated maid spent most of her wages to send parcels containing cigarettes, chocolate, and other comforts to the heart-smashing Legionnaire.

Thorin came to Paris again early in January, 1916, and Paul Rockwell accompanied him when he returned to La Valbonne. He had overstayed his leave twenty-four hours — any Legionnaire who overstayed his leave more than forty-eight hours was posted as a deserter and court-martialled as such if caught — and knew that he was liable to eight days' prison sentence. Just before they reached the camp, Thorin remarked that if he had ten francs he might be able to 'fix things up' with his corporal so as not to be reported late. Rockwell gave him the

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money, and was surprised to find Thorin in jail the following morning.

'What's the matter? Couldn't you "fix" the corporal?' he asked Billy.

'Well, I got to thinking it over, and decided I'd rather do the eight days and keep the ten francs myself,' was Thorin's candid reply.

Some time later, Thorin was the leader in the biggest battle ever fought at La Valbonne. He was in a café late one afternoon with Arthur Barry, Henry Claude, Charles Trinkard, and two or three other Legionnaires, and engaged in a dispute with the proprietor over the price and quality of the drinks served in the place. The café-keeper attempted to throw the Legionnaires into the street, and a battle royal ensued. Several civilians were badly beaten, the riot call was sounded, and a squad of gendarmes rushed to the scene, led by an *adjudant*. Thorin promptly knocked the latter senseless, and the Legionnaires barricaded themselves in the café, which they had thoroughly wrecked, and resisted arrest. Trinkard, who was still weak from his Champagne wound, rushed back to the camp for reinforcements, shouting that the Americans were being killed.

Ivan Nock, who was lying down in one of the barracks, heard the cry for aid, and rushed bareheaded to the scene of action. He tried to force his way through the battling throng, and went down with his skull fractured.

An entire section of French Colonial soldiers with fixed bayonets now arrived on the run, the Legionnaires surrendered to them, and were marched off to prison. Nock was taken to the hospital, where his skull was trepanned. He hovered between life and death for weeks, but as he was of an iron constitution finally recovered.

Thorin, Claude, and Barry were removed to the military prison at Lyon as the jail at La Valbonne was not considered

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solid enough to hold them. They were put in a dark underground dungeon, where they lay for weeks on straw, with a bread-and-water diet.

They were finally brought to trial before a court-martial. Thorin was considered a dangerous and unruly man; he had often been in trouble, and had dangerously injured the gendarmes' *adjudant*, so it was asked that he be sentenced to death. Mr. Ernster pleaded for him, and Mr. F. B. Grundy and other friends got up a petition for clemency. Thorin's bravery during the Champagne offensive was also urged in his favor. After much deliberation by the judges, he was sentenced to eight years' hard labor, and Claude, Barry, and Nock were given each five years of the same penalty. All four sentences were suspended, and the Americans were sent to the front and told to retrieve themselves by gallantry there.

3

There was an authentic cousin of the Kaiser William II among the Legionnaires at La Valbonne in the spring of 1916. His name was Maurice Magnus, and he was an American citizen, as he was born in New York, on November 7, 1876. His parents were German immigrants, and, according to excellent authority, his mother was an illegitimate daughter of the old German Kaiser, William I.

Magnus was a pompous, pretentious little man. He had been for years in the theatrical business, and was at one time the manager of Isadora Duncan, the dancer. He had lived in Italy for some time, where he edited the 'Roman Review,' a sorry English-language publication which was killed by the war. He also contributed occasional articles to Middle-Western newspapers, but he seems to have been chiefly a parasite and a cheat, with tastes far above his income.

With the avowed intention of getting material for a book,

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Magnus crossed from Italy to Tunis in March, 1916, and enlisted in the Foreign Legion. He was sent to the *dépôt* of the Legion at Sidi-bel Abbès, where he drilled for a few weeks. He was much impressed by the number of Germans he met in the Legion in Algeria; men who had enlisted in order to keep from being confiscated property they had acquired in business in France.

Magnus was then sent to La Valbonne. The Americans who knew him there remarked two conspicuous things about him: his deep personal hatred of the Kaiser, and his fright at the sight of war-mutilated men who were waiting their discharge from the Army.

Magnus was named in a detachment of men to go to the front. That was the last place in the world he wanted to be: he obtained a short leave of absence to go to Paris, supposedly to wind up his affairs. As soon as he got to Paris, he changed his uniform for civilian clothes, had his passport viséed for Italy at the American Consulate-General — making no mention of his service in the Legion — and took the express for Nice. He was horribly frightened all the time during the trip South, and expected at any moment one of his former officers in the Legion to walk in on him.

From Nice he went to Menton, and at the frontier post there made friends with an unsuspecting Italian customs guard. He thought every man who walked behind him was a detective, and constantly shivered with apprehension at the thought of being arrested. Finally he managed to walk across the St. Louis bridge into Italy, pretending a visit to the Italian guard who was off duty at the moment, and went to Borderhiga, where he took the train to Rome. From there he went to Spain. Later he returned to Italy, and resumed his career as a cheat and swindler. He got out of Italy, with the police hot on his trail because of bad checks he had passed, and took up his abode in Malta. He began swindling again, and after a few months on

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the island committed suicide while the Maltese police waited outside his door to carry him off to prison.

A manuscript Magnus had written fell into the hands of D. H. Lawrence, an English novelist, and was published under the title 'Memoirs of the Foreign Legion.' Lawrence must have wanted badly to recover money he had advanced to Magnus: he tells of loans he had made to the latter, and states frankly in a ninety-four-page introduction — the only entertaining part of the book — that unless the volume proved a success, Magnus's debts could never be paid. The 'Memoirs' are worse than the usual slop written by deserters from the Foreign Legion, and are full of incredible misstatements and lies. Magnus speaks of some of the Americans he met at La Valbonne; he passes accurate judgment on Attey and Collins (called Sullivan in the published volume), but basely slanders Casey. He was forced to praise Bouligny for his soldierly qualities and his fairness as a Sergeant: no one could come in contact with Bouligny without admiring him and recognizing him as a *man*.

D. H. Lawrence said of Magnus: 'One is driven by very rage to wonder if he was really a spy, a German spy whom Germany cast off because he was no good.'

Most of the men who knew Magnus in the Legion would answer in the affirmative.

Attey — who also called himself Athey and Donald Thane — was a would-be poet and magazine writer, and claimed to be from Baltimore, Maryland. He stated that he had become bored with life at home, so worked his way across the Atlantic and entered the Legion. The more he listened to the men who had been at the front talk about the life there the longer his face became. He was named to go to the front with reënforcements, obtained leave to go to Paris 'to settle his affairs,' and the Legion knew him no more.

Harry Cushing Collins appeared at La Valbonne in the spring of 1916. He announced his arrival in the Paris edition of the

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'New York Herald' of May 13. After telling of his heroism and narrow escapes from death as he bore the brunt of the rear-guard fighting during the retreat from Serbia, he said: 'As the retreat and the chaotic conditions which followed it upset my plans to have a detachment of American comrades sent down there where work of a special character was to be given them, I am glad to be back here in France among them.'

Collins's account of his life and boldness as a fighter was too flamboyant for the French censors, and more than half of the space assigned by the editor of the 'Herald' for his letter was left a blank.

Collins was ordered to the front, but it was impossible to get any service out of him. He would hide away and weep bitterly, and tried his old trick of feigning insanity. He finally was sent to the military hospital at Lyon. There he either fell into the hands of an inexperienced doctor, or else the Legion had had enough of him, for he was discharged from the French Army, the official records stating that he was released because of 'hysterical neurasthenia.'

John Paul Du Bois was also at La Valbonne in the spring of 1916. The sentence of five years' hard labor for striking an officer was still hanging over him, and he was anxious to desert from the Legion. He was in correspondence with a number of anarchists scattered about Europe, and one of them supplied him with a forged passport. Some of Du Bois's letters were intercepted by the French military authorities, the false passport was discovered, and he was locked up in jail. He laid a careful plan to break away from La Valbonne, but it miscarried, and he was removed to the more formidable military prison at Lyon.

Du Bois now began to feign violent madness. Almost every time a jailer appeared with food or water, the American would shriek loudly and try to attack him. At other times, he would weep, and beg the jailer not to come near him, saying that he

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was afflicted with homicidal mania, and was afraid he might commit murder.

Du Bois was put under the observation of the doctors, and so cleverly did he feign insanity that he was discharged from the Legion, and advised to leave France as quickly as possible. Du Bois did not need to be urged; he still feared that the hard-labor sentence might be remembered against him. As soon as he could secure passage, he took a boat back to America.

Chapter IX

‘LES HIRONDELLES DE LA MORT’

THE Americans who changed from the Foreign Legion to the One Hundred and Seventieth Line Infantry Regiment included Walter K. Appleton, Jr.; John Bowe; Ferdinand Capdevielle; John A. Cordonnier; Dennis Dowd; William E. Dugan; Corporals Frank Dupont, Charles Hoffecker, and Eugene Jacob; David Wooster King; J. Laurent; Sergeant Robert Mulhauser; Frank Musgrave; Paul Pavelka; Marius Rocle; Robert Soubiran; and Michael Steinfelds. In addition, there were Elov Nilson, who called himself ‘the adopted Yankee,’ and had registered in the Legion as coming from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he had relatives, and Eugene Bullard, a coal-black Negro ex-boxer and musician, who gave his address as Columbus, Georgia, but was said to be of British West Indian origin.

Sergeant Mulhauser was put in command of a section, and Corporals Dupont, Jacob, and Hoffecker were given charge of squads. Mulhauser, Jacob, and Laurent were all three experienced machine-gunners, and were continued at that duty.

If any of the Americans had transferred to the One Hundred and Seventieth Regiment expecting to find things easier there than in the Legion, they quickly realized their mistake. The One Hundred and Seventieth was an attacking regiment; and had taken an active part in almost every important battle since the day war was declared. It had been decimated time and again, and had won a great reputation for courage.

The Americans marched thirty-five kilometres back from the firing line to join their new regiment, which was recuperating

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from its terrible losses during the Champagne offensive. Other reënforcements arrived from the regimental *dépôt* the same day, and the One Hundred and Seventieth marched straight back to the front, and took over the very trenches the Legion had been holding.

Paul Pavelka wrote:

‘We came back into the same sector where we had been, and relieved the Legion. It was very nice to see the old boys again. They were very much pleased to see the Americans. There was not very much time to talk to them, but I found out that they were going to another sector where they expected to remain for the winter.

‘I felt blue on seeing the old Legionnaires, with whom I had spent a year of service, going away. Whether or not we shall ever see one another again is hard to tell. I do wish that our regiments will have another opportunity to fight side by side. Another thing I shall miss is our good old side-kickers, the Algerians and Moroccans. They always go with the Legion, and I shall not again have the pleasure of hearing their native language and songs, which used to amuse us all.’

The men of the One Hundred and Seventieth set to work with pick, shovel, and axe, and consolidated and strengthened their position, which so recently had been the rear of the German first defense line and as such wrecked by the French artillery fire. The soldiers labored under a continual enemy bombardment.

During the very first stretch of duty with their new regiment in the trenches, there were several casualties among the Americans. Dennis Dowd was painfully wounded in the right hand by a shrapnel ball, and was sent to the hospital. Robert Soubiran applied the first-aid dressing to Dowd’s wound, and a half-hour later was on his way to the hospital with a big shell-splinter in his knee.

Within the next few days, John Bowe was wounded in the

forehead by a shrapnel ball; Frank Musgrave was gassed, and injured in the side; Michael Steinfels broke his arm; and Elov Nilson fell ill from the effects of gas; all four were evacuated from the front, and joined Dowd and Soubiran in the hospital.

David King was buried alive by a shell explosion; his comrades dug him out, seemingly none the worse for the experience. The following day King started to fire at a party of Germans a suddenly lifted fog exposed working between the lines, and found that his right eye had been gravely affected by the concussion of the exploding shell. Not wishing to leave his regiment, King said nothing of his infirmity, and learned to take aim from his left shoulder.

On October 30 the Germans made a determined attempt to storm by a surprise attack the position held by the One Hundred and Seventieth. No artillery preparation was made, as the enemy thought the French defenses could not as yet be well organized. Toward nightfall an entire regiment suddenly emerged from the German lines and rushed toward the French position. For a few minutes things were very lively, but the machine-gun and rifle fire of the French was too much for the assailants, who turned and fled into their trenches in great disorder, leaving behind many dead and wounded. It was all over before the French batteries got well warmed up.

Pavelka was made liaison agent between the different companies of his battalion, and was sent up into the woods to carry messages from one post to another.

'Something on the style of the old pony-expresses in the West,' he wrote; 'the only difference is we have no ponies. We work it two men to a watch, and the watch lasts six hours. We carry our orders alternatively, one down the line and the other up the line, and *vice-versa*. I had a little to do with the arrangement of this system, and all the boys are well contented.

'There are four of us here. One of the best features of this job is that we can have a little fire hidden in our dugout, which helps

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greatly toward making us more comfortable. Our food is passed along the same way as the communications, and when it gets to our post, it is plenty cold. Here again our fire comes in handy.'

Winter set in, and the trenches were more than ever cold and damp and muddy. There were numerous cases of frost-bite and frozen feet. The Americans wondered at and admired the stoicism and spirit of their French comrades, many of whom were from the part of France occupied by the Germans and did not have even the consolation and encouragement of letters and news from their loved ones to brighten their days.

Pavelka cut his hands badly helping put out barbed-wire entanglements; he had them bandaged, and remained at the front, praying that the Germans would not attack while he handled his rifle so clumsily.

The cold became bitter. An allowance of charcoal was issued to each man, and the men accepted with resignation the prospect of a winter in the ill-prepared Champagne trenches.

Toward the end of November, Pavelka came to Paris on *permission*. Since before the Champagne offensive he had not had the time or opportunity to change his clothes or wash up, and the mud of the trenches and blood of the battlefield clung to his uniform. Almost a pound of shrapnel bullets were picked out of the lining of his greatcoat.

When Pavelka rejoined his regiment on November 30, he found awaiting him an order to change to the Aviation. The great desire of his life was realized. He had put in a request to transfer to the Air Service along with Kiffin Rockwell, but it was a difficult matter to be sent from the trenches to the Aviation school. Fortunately for him, three distinguished Frenchmen took a friendly interest in the American volunteers: Monsieur Georges Leygues, Deputy from the Lot-et-Garonne Department and President of the French Government's Foreign Affairs Committee; Monsieur Stephen Jouselin, Paris Municipi-

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pal Councillor, whose wife was Miss Kate Cutler, of Chicago, and whose only son, a Spahi officer, was killed early in the war; and Monsieur J. de Sillac, an eminent diplomat attached to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These influential persons kept pushing Pavelka's request to become an aviator, until finally it was granted.

2

During a period in the Champagne reserve trenches, Eugene Jacob called Charles Hoffecker a 'dirty Boche.' Hoffecker, whose family went to America from the German-speaking part of Switzerland, bitterly resented the epithet, and challenged Jacob to a duel. The challenge was accepted, and the duel came off when the One Hundred and Seventieth went to a village in the rear for the periodical repose. Bayonets were the weapons, and the two Americans set to fighting in deadly earnest. Both had taken fencing lessons, and they gave a good display of that art. Hoffecker drew first blood, slightly wounding his opponent in the shoulder; more serious injury might have been done had not the arrival of an officer and a guard of ten men put an end to the fight. It was first proposed to court-martial the two combatants, but when the circumstance bringing about the duel was explained, the Americans were let off with a severe admonition, after they had shaken hands.

Frank Musgrave spent two months in the hospital, then was sent back to the front, this time with the Forty-Fourth Line Infantry Regiment, which was holding a line of trenches in advance of Vaux, near Verdun.

The entire Verdun front had been extremely calm for many months, hardly a shell being fired on either side, and it was looked upon as an ideal repose sector. French aviators had reported for months the observation of remarkable activity behind the German lines opposite Verdun, and in December, 1915,

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Colonel Driant, a prominent French officer and Deputy from Nancy, sounded a stern warning of an impending enemy assault against the stronghold on the Meuse. But the Germans were also very active behind the Champagne front, evidently preparing a grand attack there; they had not constructed in the Verdun region any parallel take-off trenches toward the French defenses, such as had been previously used in offensive actions; and Joffre did not have enough troops to mass divisions behind both threatened sectors.

When Musgrave arrived at Vaux in mid-February, 1916, General Herr, the French commander of the Verdun front, had under his orders nine divisions of infantry and six artillery regiments. The German Crown Prince had opposite Verdun nineteen divisions, and the most formidable concentration of artillery yet seen.

At seven-fifteen on the morning of February 21, on a cold, dry day, the storm broke. The thousands of German batteries massed along the narrow front opened up, and with a bombardment, beside which Musgrave afterwards said the French preparatory bombardments in Artois and Champagne were mere child's play, the French first defenses were wiped out. Barbed-wire belts disappeared; trenches were levelled, and bomb-proof shelters became reddened and blackened craters with morsels of human flesh sticking to the sides. Long-range guns destroyed the telephone lines leading back to the rear, and a barrage of steel and lead hung between the front-line defenders and the reserve troops.

The German infantry left its trenches late in the afternoon, and walked over to what had been the French first lines. Here and there a machine-gun crew had somehow survived the inferno, and inflicted losses upon the invaders before they themselves were killed.

The bombardment kept up, and behind it the infiltration of the German infantry into the French lines continued. Colonel

Driant was killed on the 22d, and his battalion of Alpine *chasseurs* was wiped out. The situation became desperate: General Joffre ordered, 'Resist, and hold Verdun.'

Musgrave's regiment was decimated as it doggedly held on to its position defending the fort and village of Vaux. His company was completely surrounded by the enemy. Aid could not break through the wall of shells and bayonets, and on February 26 Musgrave and a small group of comrades, their ammunition exhausted and without food or drink since forty-eight hours, were made prisoners.

'Lucky' Frank had fallen into the hands of the enemy, but something of his old good fortune still stuck with him. His first letter from captivity said:

'I am in a large camp, and there are Russians, English, and Belgians here, besides the French. We work sometimes, but so far I have not done much. The camp is a great barbed-wire enclosure — with large wooden barracks, like ordinary soldiers' barracks, and in fact, more comfortable than many.

'We all wear our uniforms, which are of many varieties. There is a moving-picture show in camp, which is well attended. The titles of the scenes are in German, and they started with an interpreter translating into French, and now have English and Russian ones, too. The effect is comic, and gets me all balled up. While trying to read the German title and listen to the French and English interpreters at once, I lose out all around.

'There are men here captured at Mons and other ancient battles. They must have forgotten what a war looks like.'

General Pétain took command at Verdun on February 26, and all available troops were hastened to the defense. The One Hundred and Seventieth quit its reserve sector, and hurried toward the endangered citadel. Jack Janz, just out of the hospital from his wounds of May 9, joined the other Americans in the One Hundred and Seventieth Regiment. He had learned in the

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hospital that his combat comrade Musgrave had shifted from the Legion to the One Hundred and Seventieth, and had asked to follow him there. He was greatly disappointed when he learned on arriving that Musgrave had again changed corps.

The One Hundred and Seventieth spent a week in reserve under the very walls of Verdun, then on March 3 entered the fiery furnace.

Jack Janz was blown to pieces at Vaux; not enough of his body was found for a burial. He was cited in the Order of the Day, his citation reading:

Jack Janz: an American citizen, a brave and courageous soldier. Killed at his outlook post during a violent bombardment.

Janz was born in Philadelphia, of German parentage. He looked upon the latter fact as a 'skeleton in the family closet,' and the only one of his comrades to whom he confided his racial origin was Paul Pavelka. He usually said he was from Kentucky, where he had once lived, because of the small proportion of inhabitants of Teutonic blood in that State. He was a fine, sturdy soldier, and his comrades especially remarked his hatred of the enemy.

Jack Cordonnier was gravely wounded the same day Janz fell, and was sent back to the hospital. Walter Appleton was evacuated from the front after the battle, ill from exposure. He learned at the hospital that Michael Steinfels had been invalided out of the Army, with a permanently stiff elbow. Ferdinand Capdevielle was promoted corporal quartermaster, because of the part he took in the defense of Vaux.

The German onslaught against Verdun was temporarily halted, and the opposing armies caught their breath for a moment. General Joffre was pleased with the efforts of his soldiers, and thanked them in undying words:

Germany... had not reckoned with you.... Of you it will be said: they barred to the Germans the way to Verdun.



THE UNITED STATES FLAG CARRIED BY THE AMERICAN
VOLUNTEERS WHO JOINED THE SECOND FOREIGN
REGIMENT IN AUGUST, 1914

The flag now reposes in the great French War Museum at the Hôtel des Invalides, Paris



O. L. McLELLAN (*left*), DEAN OF THE AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS
IN THE FOREIGN LEGION AND THEODORE HAAS

Camp de La Valbonne, June, 1917

The men of the One Hundred and Seventieth Line Infantry Regiment, including the handful of American volunteers, belonged to the phalanx of heroes to which the French Commander-in-Chief's praise was addressed.

3

The One Hundred and Seventieth next occupied reserve trenches on the Verdun front, always under the enemy bombardment. Men arrived from the regimental *dépôts* to fill the gaps in the ranks. More machine guns were issued, and a new model automatic rifle which could be employed by one man was distributed. Two of these guns were equal in rapidity of fire to one machine gun, and they rendered great service because of the ease with which they were handled.

The enemy continued to pound away relentlessly at the French defenses, seemingly having an unlimited supply of ammunition and men. The German infantry used great quantities of burning liquid thrown from perfected lance-flames, and slowly but surely seemed to be eating its way toward Verdun, which the German High Command now proclaimed was the very 'heart of France.'

General Mangin, one of the greatest gainers of victories the war revealed, threw his Fifth Division — iron fighting men all — forward to retake some of the most important gains. The One Hundred and Seventieth counter-attacked on May 1 in the strategically necessary Caillette Wood. Capdevielle depicted the struggle there:

'It was the hardest fighting of all. We marched to the firing line in the dark, picking our way by the dead bodies lining the route. The Germans were shelling us to the best of their ability, and our guns replied vigorously. No small artillery was used, but the biggest cannon on each side.

'After a stay in a poorly made open trench, we were ordered

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to charge the Germans. The boys were glad to be in action, and covered the distance between them and the Boches in a hurry. Some of us had trench knives. Charles Hoffecker practically decapitated four Huns before he was struck by shell fragments and gravely wounded. Several of the Americans won much praise by their work.'

Charles Hoffecker died at the field hospital on May 3, two days after he was wounded. His body was riddled with shell fragments, and he could not be saved. Before he died, his colonel pinned on his breast the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*, and he was cited in Army Orders as a valorous American volunteer, mortally wounded after he killed several of the enemy in a bayonet assault against the German trenches.

A number of the Americans were sent to the hospital with wounds received in the Caillette Wood. William Dugan was hit in the arms and shoulder by shell fragments. A shrapnel ball passed through Marius Rocle's arm. Bob Scanlon had a big hole torn in his left hand by a piece of shell-casing, and David King was struck in the side by a large stone thrown up by a shell explosion.

Eugene Jacob and John Laurent were reported missing for several hours. Their section of machine-gunners was surrounded for a time by the enemy, and attacked with flame-throwers. Relief arrived, in time to save the men from a frightful death. Laurent and Corporal Dupont were later gassed and sent to the rear; Laurent was assigned to drive a motor-truck, because of his age and weakened condition.

Robert Mulhauser was promoted from sergeant to *sous-lieutenant*, and decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*, a fine citation accompanying the medal:

An American citizen, enlisted voluntarily for the duration of the war. At the front since October, 1914, he especially distinguished himself at Verdun on May 1, 1916, and on the following days, where as chief of a section he gave proof of great courage and energy.

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Eugene Jacob was made a sergeant, and awarded the *Croix de Guerre* with this mention:

An American volunteer: an excellent non-commissioned officer, of remarkable devotion and *sang-froid*; during the sojourn of his regiment in the trenches he accomplished with the greatest contempt of danger difficult missions under intense bombardments.

Capdevielle was given the *Croix de Guerre* for his coolness and bravery as a dispatch-bearer under fire, and William Dugan gained the same decoration with a citation which said that 'during the attack of May 1, 1916, he joined bravely in the assault of the enemy trenches and took several prisoners.'

Elov Nilson was made interpreter, and decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*, with seven remarkable mentions:

1. During a severe bombardment while fetching food he stopped and bandaged a badly wounded comrade after the others had taken shelter, carried him three hundred metres to safety and later fifteen hundred metres to a first-aid station.

2. In broad daylight during a heavy bombardment he accompanied a sergeant between the lines to seek two comrades who had been wounded the night before.

3. When sent as an interpreter for a convoy of twenty-eight prisoners, the officer commanding being killed on the way, Nilson took charge of the party and, assisted by only three guards, escorted the convoy safely to headquarters, twenty-five kilometres distant.

4. He valorously went from the food station to the front-line trenches during a terrific bombardment and carried fifty litres of wine and a quantity of food for a company which had been forty-eight hours without nourishment.

5. He valorously buried five friends killed between the lines where the trenches were only thirty-five metres apart.

6. Remained alone at a listening-post for six hours during a violent bombardment after seven comrades had been killed, thereby saving the entire line.

7. Stayed with and bandaged the badly wounded chief of his sec-

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tion, and at the muzzle of his revolver compelled the stretcher-bearers of another regiment to carry the chief to a first-aid station.

Jacob and Nilson were both proposed for the *Médaille Militaire*, the most ardently coveted decoration to be won in the French Army.

The retaking by the French of the Caillette Wood freed the approaches to Souville Fort and to the north of Vaux, and greatly lessened the enemy pressure on Verdun. The battle continued to rage, however, while the One Hundred and Seventieth rested and refilled its depleted ranks at a Meusian village within cannon sound of the fighting line, ready to take its place in the first defense at a moment's notice.

Hindenburg afterwards said of the struggle for Verdun: 'The battles which were fought in this region exhausted our strength as does a wound which will not heal.'

Chapter X

THE SOMME

THE Legionnaires had all been wondering why they were not sent to Verdun. Most of the shock regiments of the French Army passed one after the other through the ordeal of battle there, and the Legion was not accustomed to be kept away from where the struggle was fiercest.

General Joffre knew what he was about, however. In December, 1915, weeks before the storm broke around Verdun, he had decided upon a huge-scale attack against the German lines in the Somme, to take place during the summer of 1916, in conjunction with the British forces, and throughout the darkest days of the struggle for Verdun he continued his preparations for this offensive action. Just the number of divisions necessary to hold back the Germans from Verdun were sent into the battle-line there, and a splendid reserve army was put in readiness for the Franco-British assault.

The German positions in the Somme were exceptionally formidable. Already well defended by nature, they had been strengthened further by every device known to military engineers. Each village and every wood was a fortress; every house an armored blockhouse. The network of trenches and barbed-wire entanglements lay several miles deep, and it had been easy to burrow deep into the chalky soil, and make dug-outs that were entirely shell-proof. Machine-gun redoubts were thickly strewn all along the line, so placed that a handful of men could defend a wide front.

The Legion quit its trenches opposite Lassigny on June 21, entrained at Estrées-Saint-Denis, and after a few hours'

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stuffy ride debarked at Villers-Bretonneux. Two of the battalions went into cantonment at Bayonvillers, awaiting the hour of attack, while the First Battalion worked in the Dom-pierre sector and prepared approach trenches.

Nelson Larsen arrived with a detachment of reënforcements. He had spent almost a year in a Brittany hospital, where a skilful facial surgeon had rebuilt his chin, which had been shot away on June 16, 1915. Edgar Bouligny, Wilfred Michaud, Frank Whitmore, Frank Clair, Robert Whidby, James Bracy, Jack Moyet, Jimmie Paul, and other Americans were among the men who arrived from La Valbonne, and the three battalions of the Legion were built up to full strength.

Alan Seeger wrote on June 28:

‘We go up to the attack to-morrow. This will probably be the biggest thing yet. We are to have the honor of marching in the first wave. No sacks, but two *musettes*, *toile de tente* slung over shoulder, plenty of cartridges, grenades, and *baionnette au canon*.

‘I am glad to be going in the first wave. If you are in this thing at all, it is best to be in to the limit. And this is the supreme experience.’

Seeger had just been given one of the new machine-gun rifles. He found it ‘an excellent weapon and ought to give good results. I am glad to have charge of one, for it is a more or less responsible position, and one where there is a chance for personal initiative.’

On July 1, the Franco-British troops attacked along a forty-kilometre front, and occupied the first-line German positions without too much difficulty. The defenders were absolutely dazed from the preparatory bombardment, which had wiped their barbed-wire belts and trenches from the face of the earth. The Legion was being held in reserve for the assault against the second-line defenses, and followed the regiments which took the first positions. Christopher Charles, who was operating a machine gun, wrote a lively account of the operations:

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'On the morning of July 1 we arrived at a first-line German trench, which a Colonial regiment had just taken. The regiment in front of us was steadily advancing, and we followed in support until the night of July 3, when we moved up in front and relieved the other regiment. The Colonials had pushed the Germans into the open country, and so, when we relieved them, we went into open fields and lay all night without shelter or protection.

'July 4 was calm until three o'clock in the afternoon, when our famous seventy-fives began to clear the way for us. The artillery pounded the Germans for more than two hours, and at five o'clock came the order to charge. The boys rose from where they had been lying and started forward. The Germans, seeing us, began a heavy bombardment with field guns and fusillade with rifles and machine guns, but it did not stop the Legion. We kept straight on. Being in the machine-gun section, I was not in the first wave of the assault and so had a fine view of the charge. It was great to see the boys crossing the hill. The Germans were about eight hundred metres away. The boys walked at an easy gait until they were within two hundred yards of the enemy. They were then within good range of German rifles and rapid-firers and they began falling fast.

'When the boys saw their friends falling, they got mad and went forward like a cyclone. In five minutes they had taken the German trenches and more than two hundred prisoners, the enemy not resisting vigorously when at close quarters. My section reached the trenches before the fighting was over and had a hand in it. We took a few minutes' rest in the captured trenches, while the prisoners were being taken to the rear. Oscar Mouvet shouted to me: "We won't get to Paris July 4, but I will be there before you." The American volunteers would have been given a holiday in Paris but for the offensive.

'We started again for the Germans, who had taken position

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in the strongly fortified village of Belloy-en-Santerre, a short distance ahead. When about two hundred yards from the Germans, we lay down for a little rest, and then with a shout we attacked the village. As we reached the outskirts, Mouvet was hit, and he started crawling for the rear, shouting: "Good-bye, boys. Me for Paris!" The village was a hard proposition, as the Boches put up a stiff resistance. The fighting was from house to house. It was costly work, as every shelter had to be cleared. Many of the houses were in good condition, as they were far from our heaviest bombardment.

'In a fight in one of the houses Wilfred Michaud was killed. He had just run his bayonet through a German when another German shot him with a revolver. He fell, shouting: "I die happy, because I have killed a Boche!" A German ran out of a cellar and threw a grenade at Frank Whitmore, who was badly cut by the fragments. Frank Clair was gravely wounded. Marcel Collett, whose twin brother Joseph recently was killed in the trenches, was hit three times by machine-gun bullets. Nothing could stop the Legion. Within twenty minutes Belloy-en-Santerre was cleared of Germans, and we had taken more than three hundred additional prisoners.

'When we had cleaned the village houses thoroughly of the Germans, we took a little rest, after which we started forward again and chased the Boches three kilometres over open country. We then reached a thick hedge where the Germans put up an awful battle. They fought stubbornly and counter-attacked three times. The last time they came in heavy force and compelled us to drop back a little way. One of our machine guns, which could not be moved back in time, was lost. In the fight for the gun, John Charton was killed. He was kneeling, firing and reloading his rifle when a bullet pierced his heart.

'For an hour we had a hot time. We had great difficulty in keeping the Germans back. At the end our supply of cartridges ran low and we had to let up on firing. The Germans, seeing

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that we had stopped, started forward through a little trench they had dug behind the hedge. Here Jimmie Paul showed what a cool head could do. He and a lot more of us did not have any cartridges left, but he seized a box of hand grenades in our temporary trench and for fifteen minutes we held a company of Germans back.

'The Legion was spread out over a long distance of the line, and judging from the light firing the whole outfit was out of ammunition. When our supply of hand grenades ran out, there was only one thing for the Legion to do. We charged forward, took with the bayonet the German trenches and several hundred prisoners, and then with the enemy's own rifles and grenades held back the reënforcements which rushed forward to attack us.

'At midnight other sections relieved us and we returned to the second line, where we found a hot meal. Believe me, we suddenly discovered that we were a hungry lot of men. We surely did eat. We had done a good day's work, and everybody was happy and contented. The boys in the first line also had a hot meal, for that night the rolling kitchens went right up to the firing trenches, and dished out "eats" and wine. For here it is realized that a man must eat to fight well. The Germans counter-attacked three times that night, but there is no regiment in all Germany which the Legion cannot stop.

'July 5 was a quiet day and the Legion was relieved and we retired to the third-line trenches, where we slept and enjoyed a much-needed rest until the 7th, when we started forward again. It began raining and continued to rain all night. The boys had a hard time, wading to the first line through the communication trenches, walking ankle-deep in the bloody mire over the ground just taken from the Germans and where no one had had time to bury the dead. The Germans shelled us vigorously. There were no shelters and the first-line trenches were only shallow ones, which the Germans had dug the day before.

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We stood in the rain and mud all night firing away into the darkness.

'At eight o'clock in the morning the order came to prepare to attack. At ten o'clock, when it stopped raining, the boys were wet to the skin. I was so tired that I had fallen down asleep in the mud. I was so covered with mud that, when Colonel Cot came, he walked right on me. I gave a grunt, and then he had to laugh when he looked at me. Seeing how tired his men were, he stopped the preparations for the attack. At 3 P.M. an order came saying that the Germans had fallen back into better positions and for us to go after them. We went.

'On the morning of the 10th we were relieved and sent to the rear. It was an unforgettable sight to see the bit left of the Legion coming along the road. Some were playing on flutes taken from the Germans, others were singing, but all were dead tired. I was all in.

'Here in the cantonment I have seen Whidby, Jimmie Paul, and Jack Moyet, who pulled through. How the others fared, I do not know. It is rumored that Alan Seeger was hit, but I have not seen him. Billy Thorin, Arthur Barry, and Henry Claude have just arrived from La Valbonne.'

Jack Moyet added to Charles's story of the battle:

'I am a grenade-thrower for my squad, and so was in the first wave of attack. I was much impressed by the conduct of the priest of my battalion, a tall, full-bearded man, who has been with the Legion for several years. He ran right along behind the grenade-throwers, holding aloft his crucifix and crying: "Long live the Legion! Forward for France!"

'With two comrades and my sergeant, who is a German-Swiss, I sprang into a cellar at the edge of Belloy-en-Santerre. A German Major was talking over the telephone. When we rushed upon him, he sprang up and shouted: "All right! I surrender! But you only get me alive because my best friend is here wounded!"



EXHAUSTED LEGIONNAIRES SLEEPING DURING
A TEN-MINUTES HALT



LEGIONNAIRES AWAITING THE ORDER TO 'GO OVER THE TOP'
NEAR BELLOY-EN-SANTERRE, JULY 4, 1916

The officer is holding his watch in his hand waiting for the 'zero hour'

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‘A little farther along, a number of Germans tried to get out of a dugout to set up a machine gun. We drove them back inside their shelter, hastily blocked the entrance except for a small hole, and hurled grenades in on the Boches. We afterwards learned that we killed over sixty Germans in that one dugout.

‘In several of the cemented cellars in the village we found sheep, cows, and horses, and in one cellar was a civilian, the sole inhabitant of the place who had refused to leave when Belloy began to be bombarded. He told us that until a few days before about eighty civilians had been staying in their homes. He did not stop long to talk with us, but asked where our kitchens were and set off to get some food.

‘After the fight we counted more than one thousand dead Germans, and we had taken about eight hundred unwounded prisoners — more than the number of valid Legionnaires we had left. The Germans have a great fear of the Legion, but an even greater fear of the Senegalese, who fight alongside us, and they always prefer to surrender to us.

‘We fought in the region of Belloy for several days, and then we went out some distance beyond any trenches and were ordered to charge some German earthworks at the foot of a long, rolling hill. Just as we started to advance, my Captain, an extremely brave Annamite named Do-Hu-Vi, was shot dead at my side. Many of my comrades fell in the charge. There were two brothers from Luxembourg, who always had been together. One fell with a bullet through his forehead; the other sprang in advance and shouted: “Forward to avenge my brother!” He passed through the attack safely, and was given the War Cross with a fine citation.

‘We ran into an awful entanglement of barbed wire, machine-gun pits, and traps of all kinds. We killed all the enemy there, but were held up on the hillside by other machine guns. Our field cannon came up and shelled the Germans, who were strongly entrenched ahead of us.

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'Among the dead I noticed one German Lieutenant who had been killed as he was watching us through his field glasses. A bullet had passed through one of the lenses of the glasses and gone into his eye.

'Some of the German dugouts in the region were seventy-five feet deep and arranged as regular underground skyscrapers, only they "scraped" in the wrong direction. Many Germans were buried alive in these *cagnas* by our shell-fire.

'The Legion lost many men during all this fighting. My battalion chief, Commandant James Waddell, a New Zealander with fourteen years' service and a fine record in the Legion, was one of the few officers to come out of the fighting alive.'

The deeds of heroism accomplished by the Legionnaires were innumerable. At dawn of July 5 the Germans made a desperate effort to recapture Belloy-en-Santerre. Making a turning movement along the Barleux road, they surprised, before it was yet daylight, the remnants of three sections of Legionnaires who were guarding Belloy Park.

The Corsican Pasqualaggi, now a *sous-lieutenant*, was sent in haste with a section of men to reestablish the situation.

'I count absolutely upon you,' the captain commanding the battalion told him.

Pasqualaggi posted his section along the route from Belloy to Barleux, and thus cut off from retreat the Germans in the park, at the same time blocking the way for reënforcements. A company of Germans hastening up to aid their comrades were shot down with machine guns. The Germans in the park then attempted to cut their way out.

They dragged with them a group of unarmed Legionnaire prisoners. Pasqualaggi at first thought it was a ruse on the part of the enemy to get him to hold up his fire; then he recognized one of his comrades, Lieutenant Benoit, who had been slightly wounded the day before. Quick as a flash, he shouted to the captives: 'Lie down!' The latter instantly fell flat on

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the ground, and the mitrailleuses opened up on their captors. Most of the Germans untouched by the first salvo threw up their hands and surrendered. A few tried to get away, dragging the wounded Lieutenant Benoit with them, but their late prisoners jumped upon them, and with hands, feet, and steel helmets beat them into submission.

During the attack on the Boyau du Chancelier, Commandant Waddell wanted to send a message to the company of Captain Do-Hu-Vi, which was held up in an open field by an intense machine-gun fire. The first liaison agent was killed, and a second one and a third wounded.

The order must be delivered. The Legionnaire Morel offered to carry it. He managed to get through the storm of bullets and arrived at the company, to find Captain Do-Hu-Vi killed, and Lieutenant Octobon, the second in command, grievously wounded by a bullet in the stomach. Morel bandaged the wound, then with a small shovel dug a shallow *boyau* across the exposed field to a shell-pit ten metres away, and carefully dragged the wounded officer over into the shelter. He installed Octobon as comfortably as possible, then made his way back to Waddell's post of commandment and reported on the situation.

At nightfall Morel guided stretcher-bearers across the battle-swept field to where the Lieutenant lay, and saw him safely on the way to the hospital.

Two of the three battalion chiefs, Commandants Mouchet and Ruelland, were killed; and three captains: Do-Hu-Vi, Marollf, a Swiss volunteer, and Littré, a veteran of numerous African campaigns. Do-Hu-Vi was the son of an immensely rich Annam mandarin, and started the war in the French Army Aviation. He was wounded as an aviator and unfitted for further flying, and asked to serve in the Legion. Lieutenant Sotiropoulos, a Greek volunteer, and nine other lieutenants were among the dead, and almost all the other officers were wounded.

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More American volunteers were killed during the storming of Belloy-en-Santerre on July 4 than in any other battle of the Legion. Alan Seeger fell mortally wounded early in the charge. One of his friends, Corporal Barret, an Irish volunteer, wrote:

‘Seeger was wounded horribly by six explosive bullets from machine guns whose fire met the first wave of attack and caused heavy losses at Belloy-en-Santerre. Eye-witnesses belonging to his squad gave me information which makes it appear he was not killed instantly, as he had taken off his equipment, his overcoat and his shirt, to dress his wounds. He stuck his rifle, with bayonet fixed, in the ground to show the stretcher-bearers a wounded man was near, according to a general custom which aids the hospital corps at night.

‘Five out of forty-five in his section survived the attack, and they say he was absolutely indifferent to the hail of lead and steel. He died as he lived, indifferent to danger, a real soldier and a hero. Often I think of his cheery smile as he advanced against the German guns, which he simply despised.’

Rif Bear, the singing Egyptian of Toulouse, who had become Seeger’s closest friend in the Legion, told at more length of the young American poet’s last charge:

‘The first section (Alan’s section) formed the right and vanguard of the company, and mine formed the left wing. After the first bound forward, we lay flat on the ground, and I saw the first section advancing beyond us and making toward the extreme right of the village of Belloy-en-Santerre. I caught sight of Seeger and called to him, making a sign with my hand.

‘He answered with a smile. How pale he was! His tall silhouette stood out on the green of the cornfield. He was the tallest man in his section. His head erect and pride in his eye, I saw him running forward, with bayonet fixed. Soon he disappeared and that was the last time I saw my friend.

“‘Forward!’ And we made a second bound, right to the wave of assault, which we left behind a little, and down we

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threw ourselves again. The fusillade became more and more intense, reaching a paroxysm. The mitrailleuses mow men down and the cannons thunder in desperation. Bodies are crushed and torn to fragments by the shells, and the wounded groan as they await death, for all hope of escaping alive from such a hell has fled.

‘The air is saturated with the smell of powder and blood, everywhere the din is deafening; men are torn with impatience at having to remain without moving under such a fire. We struggle even for breath, and cries resound from every side. Suddenly a word of command, an order of deliverance, passes from mouth to mouth. “Forward! With bayonets!” — the command that Seeger had awaited so long.

‘In an irresistible sublime dash, we hurled ourselves to the assault, offering our bodies as a target. It was at this moment that Alan Seeger fell heavily wounded in the stomach. His comrades saw him fall and crawl into the shelter of a shell-hole. Since that minute nobody saw him alive.

‘I will spare you an account of the rest of the battle. As soon as the enemy was driven back and Belloy-en-Santerre won, I searched for news of Seeger.... Thus ended this Fourth of July that Seeger had hoped to celebrate in Paris. On the next day we were relieved from the first lines and sent into reserve lines. A fatigue party was left to identify the dead.

‘Seeger was found dead. His body was naked, his shirt and tunic being beside him and his rifle planted in the ground with the butt in the air. He had tied a handkerchief to the butt to attract the attention of the stretcher-bearers. He was lying on his side with his legs bent.

‘It was at night by the light of a pocket electric light that he was hastily recognized. Stretcher-bearers took the body and buried it next day in the one big grave made for the regiment, where lie hundreds of bodies. This tomb is situated at the Hill 76 to the south of Belloy-en-Santerre.’

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George Delpauch charged by Seeger's side, and fell with a bullet through the groin. He saw Seeger go down, and heard him call for help, crying: 'Oh! My stomach!' He tried to crawl to Seeger, but found himself paralyzed. Seeger cried out again several times, and asked for water. Then Delpauch heard him call for his mother, and thereafter he was still.

Captain de Tscharner, a Swiss volunteer who resigned his commission as colonel in the Swiss cavalry to enlist in the Foreign Legion with a humbler rank, and himself wounded at the taking of Belloy-en-Santerre, wrote:

'It was between six and seven o'clock in the evening.

'The Ninth, then the Eleventh Company had formed the right column of the Third Battalion which had attacked the south side of Belloy-en-Santerre.

'At three hundred metres of the village, taken in the flank by a terrible fire from the enemy mitrailleuses hidden in the sunken Estrées-Belloy road, the Eleventh Company had suffered cruelly.

'In a relatively narrow space of terrain, all the officers and under-officers had fallen. The immense prairie, with its uncultivated herbage, was covered with wounded men.

'With a splendid dash and devotion, the elements still intact, conducted by the corporals and the most audacious Legionnaires, continued the assault. By columns or in lines by squads, crawling, the eyes brilliant, a smile on the lips, recomforting their wounded comrades as they passed, the men of the second wave pushed on in advance in the given direction.

'Lying in the high grass, the wounded called to each other. Those who could still drag themselves along tried to form a group. But whoever lifted his head was immediately cut down.

'Then, upon the immense field there came a great silence which was troubled only by the whistling of bullets and groans.

'Suddenly, from the direction of the village, the piercing notes of a bugle sounded the charge. One heard the cries of the



ONE OF THE LEGION'S BATTLE-FRONT CEMETERIES

Left to right: Jack Casey, Elov Nilson, Alan Seeger

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final assault, the dull bursting of grenades, and the rattling of the machine guns redoubled in intensity.... The survivors of the Third Battalion had taken Belloy-en-Santerre.

'In that moment, there happened something sublime. Among the wounded and the dying, one heard suddenly a vibrant cry: "*They are there! They are there! Belloy is taken!*"

'Above the grass, the wounded lifted themselves; each one wanted to try to see, to try, by a last effort, to accompany the more fortunate comrades.

'Then an immense clamor, coming I know not from where, uttered by voices weakened, but *mâle* and triumphant, dominated the tumult of the combat and filled all the field of battle: "*Vive la Légion! Vive la France! Vive la France!*"

'It was the wounded Légionnaires who were taking their part in the victory.'

Perhaps, with his last atom of strength and his final breath of life, Alan Seeger was one of those stricken men who raised themselves up to cheer the victorious Legion.

Nelson Larsen was killed in the streets of Belloy. His squad attacked a German machine-gun battery that occupied a well-protected position in an armored cellar, from which its fire swept a wide section of field and street. The Legionnaires crept up in the shelter of the shattered walls until they were almost upon the Germans. Then they rushed forward, sprang into the cellar, and bayoneted the enemy. During the onrush Larsen was riddled with bullets at close range.

Charles Boismaure was killed just after his company left its attack trenches in the ruins of Assevillers village, long before Belloy was reached by his comrades. Maurice Leuethman, a young volunteer from Brooklyn, New York, who had enlisted at Orléans in August, 1914, was fatally wounded, and Frank Clair also died of his wounds the day following the attack. Siegfried Narvitz, the philosopher, was killed by machine-gun bullets as he bravely dashed forward against the enemy lines,

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and Joe Jackson, a tall, coal-black musician from St. Louis, Missouri, was also slain.

Camille Campaña, an accomplished young Spanish writer, was cut down by death not far from where Alan Seeger fell.

The common grave, in which the dead were laid to rest, was right under the fire of the German guns, and so thoroughly was the sector bombarded that within a few days not a trace of it could be found.

In addition to the nine Americans killed, a number were wounded. Louis Haeffle was slightly wounded by shell fragments on July 3, while the Legion was supporting the front line of attack. Theodore Haas received his second wound at Belloy, and Tony Paullet was shot through the body and at first left for dead. George Delpeuch and Marcel Collett lay for many hours on the battlefield before they were discovered by stretcher-bearers, as they were too weak to call out to the men who at night sought for the dead and wounded by the light of electric torches.

Louis Charton helped to bury the body of his brother, and on July 9 was himself gravely wounded during the attack on the Boyau du Chancelier.

The Legion spent a day in the old reserve trenches at Dom-pierre, then marched back to Villers-Bretonneux, and entrained for Montiers and Saint-Martin-aux-Bois. New officers and men joined the Regiment, and on July 30 the Legionnaires went into the trenches at Plessier-du-Roye, just north of the sector where they had been before the Belloy-en-Santerre attack.

A fourth citation in French Army Orders was given the Legion:

Under the energetic commandment of its chief, Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère*, ordered, the 4th of July, 1916, to take a village strongly occupied by the enemy, threw itself forward to the attack with a remarkable vigor and spirit, con-

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quered the village with the bayonet, broke the desperate resistance of the Germans and opposed itself afterwards to all the counter-attacks of the reënforcements brought up during the night of the 4th to the 5th of July.

Captured seven hundred and fifty prisoners, including fifteen officers, and took many mitrailleuses.

Many of the officers and Legionnaires were mentioned in Army Orders and decorated. The *Croix de Guerre* with a merited citation was bestowed posthumously upon Alan Seeger:

An enthusiastic and heroic young American, loving France passionately. Enlisted voluntarily since the beginning of hostilities, he has given proof in the course of the campaign of an admirable courage and spirit. Fell gloriously the 4th of July, 1916, during the attack of Belloy-en-Santerre.

Michaud was cited as a 'good and energetic soldier, who fell gloriously on July 4, 1916, as he threw himself forward in the assault of the German position,' and Leuethman and Larsen were also mentioned honorably in an Order of the Day.

James Paul Demetre was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*. His citation mentioned his bravery and presence of mind during the sunset fight beyond Belloy-en-Santerre, and stated that he hurled sixty-eight hand grenades into the German ranks. John Charton received the same medal, and was called 'an excellent soldier who displayed a remarkable courage on July 9, 1916. He was wounded as he advanced to the attack of a German trench.'

The *Croix de Guerre* was given to Frank Whitmore; his citation called him a 'good soldier, energetic and very calm,' and noted that, in addition to having been wounded on March 8, 1915, he refused to go to the rear on July 4, after being wounded twice, until his arm got too stiff to throw any more grenades.

George Delpeuch was awarded a palm for his *Croix de Guerre*. He lay in the hospital for many months before his wound healed.

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Joseph Phillips and Nick Karayinis were both cited in the Order of the Regiment, and decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*.

The entire Marching Regiment of the Legion was granted a new emblem of merit instituted by the French War Department, known as the *fourragère*, which was bestowed only upon regiments, battalions, and companies that had greatly distinguished themselves in battle and won at least two citations in Army Orders. The *fourragère* was a heavy braided cord composed of red and green strands, the colors shown in the ribbon of the *Croix de Guerre*. It was worn looped over the left shoulder with an end tucked into the bosom of the coat or tunic, and formed an integral part of the uniform of the men belonging to corps entitled to it. The Legionnaires were very proud of the ornamental insignia of their regiment's courage and distinction.

Jimmy Bracy gave an element of comedy to the storming of Belloy-en-Santerre. He had been given a pair of huge wire-cutters, to use on the German barbed-wire belts, and before the charge he attached the instrument to his waist by a cord. When the order to attack was given, the darky rushed madly about, his face ashy, and the wire-cutters dangling almost to the ground between his bowed legs. He was sent back to Lyon shortly after the battle, and was discharged from the Legion.

Chapter XI

ESCADRILLE LAFAYETTE

ON APRIL 16, 1916, there was formed at Luxeuil-les-Bains, an ancient town and watering-place in the foothills of the Vosges Mountains, the *Escadrille de Chasse Nieuport* 124 of the French Military Aviation, which took as its name *l'Escadrille Américaine*, and was composed of American volunteer aviators under the command of French officers. Four of the seven original members of the *Escadrille*, Victor Chapman, Kiffin Rockwell, William Thaw, and Bert Hall, came from the ranks of the Foreign Legion.

Thaw was a lieutenant, and had been flying at the front for over a year, where he had won his rank and the *Croix de Guerre* with two citations. Victor Chapman and Kiffin Rockwell were corporals, and had been flying as members of the Paris Air Guard, after they had received their pilot's *brevet* at the Camp d'Avord.

It had been extremely difficult to gain the consent of the French War Department to the formation of an *escadrille* of American aviators. An American had joined the French Military Aviation early in the war. After some weeks of training at Pau, he had deserted, and returned to America, where he gave out sensational and false interviews to newspapers about the French Aviation. He was also strongly suspected of having sold information to the German Embassy at Washington. This experience had made the French Government very wary of American volunteer aviators. Bert Hall especially was regarded with suspicion, and during the months he was in training at Avord, he was closely watched by Army Secret Service men.

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Two Army detectives, disguised as student pilots, followed him about, and slept in bunks on either side of his in the barracks.

The increasing number of American youths who were applying for admission to the French Army as aviators finally decided the formation of the *Escadrille Américaine*. To get into the French Aviation, a foreigner had to enlist first in the Foreign Legion, but several Americans, including Dudley L. Hill, Charles Chouteau Johnson, Clyde Balsley, James Roger McConnell, Robert L. Rockwell, Ronald W. Hoskier, Edwin C. Parsons, Harold B. Willis, Kenneth Marr, James Norman Hall, and others, were allowed to transfer directly to the Flying Corps, without serving in the trenches.

Frederick Zinn was changed to the Aviation on February 14, 1916, and Soubiran and Dowd were transferred as soon as they recovered from their Champagne battle wounds. Edmond Genêt and Chatkoff (who had dropped his old Christian name of Herman for the more American one of Lincoln, because his comrades had teased him that Herman sounded 'Boche') left the trenches of the Legion to become student pilots late in May. Marius Rocle and William Dugan also entered the flying school at Buc, in early June, when they got out of the hospital from their Verdun wounds.

The American *Escadrille* at Luxeuil was some time in getting its little *Nieuport* chasing aeroplanes, but as soon as they arrived began its task of patrolling the air over the battle lines in reconquered Alsace. The first victory of the *Escadrille* was won on May 18 by Kiffin Rockwell, who wrote of his triumph as follows:

'This morning I went over the lines to make a little tour. I was a little the other side of the lines, when my motor began to miss a bit. I turned around to go to a camp near the lines. Just as I started to head for there, I saw a Boche machine about seven hundred metres under me and a little inside our lines. I immediately reduced my motor, and dived for him. He saw

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me at the same time, and began to dive toward his lines. It was a machine with a pilot and a mitrailleur, with two mitrailleuses, one facing the front and one the rear that turned on a pivot, so he (the gunner) could fire in any direction. He immediately opened fire on me and my machine was hit, but I didn't pay any attention to that and kept going straight for him, until I got within twenty-five or thirty metres of him. Then, just as I was afraid of running into him, I fired four or five shots, then swerved my machine to the right to keep from running into him. As I did that, I saw the mitrailleur fall back dead on the pilot, the mitrailleuse fall from its position and point straight up in the air, the pilot fall to one side as if he was done for also. The machine itself fell first to one side, then dived vertically toward the ground with a lot of smoke coming out of the rear. I circled around, and three or four minutes later saw a lot of smoke coming up from the ground just beyond the German trenches. I had hoped that it would fall in our lines, as it is hard to prove when they fall in the German lines. The post of observation signalled seeing the machine fall, and the smoke. The captain said he would propose me for the *Médaille Militaire*, but I don't know whether I will get it or not.'

The *Escadrille* was ordered to Verdun the day after Kiffin Rockwell's victory, and immediately threw itself with ardor into the battle there. Kiffin Rockwell wrote on May 23:

'The *Escadrille* was ordered up here where the great fighting is going on and we have plenty to do to keep us busy. I have been pretty much on the go and am tired out for lack of sleep. Words are impossible to express one's impressions here, as this is the greatest thing in the history of the world. Yesterday afternoon, I flew for two hours circling around the "Mort Homme" at a very low altitude, protecting the observation machines. The most terrible fighting was going on underneath me the whole time. But I am not going to try to express my impressions, because I can't. At the same time I was doing

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that, one of my friends was over my head, about fifteen hundred feet high, having a death struggle with a German machine, which he succeeded in bringing down.'

On a dawn patrol on May 24, Thaw and Kiffin Rockwell attacked a group of Fokkers beyond Verdun; Thaw destroyed one, and the others were driven to their flying field. Later in the morning, the entire *escadrille* engaged in combats with the enemy machines which swarmed over the sector. William Thaw was wounded in the arm; Victor Chapman destroyed a Fokker, and was slightly wounded in the arm; Kiffin Rockwell fought eight different aerial duels, destroyed an enemy aeroplane, and was wounded in the face by an explosive bullet. Thaw's arm was broken, and he was taken away to the hospital; Chapman and Kiffin Rockwell had their hurts dressed, and remained at the front.

Thaw was decorated with the Legion of Honor, with a noteworthy citation:

A volunteer for the duration of the war. A pilot remarkable for his skill, his spirit, and his contempt of danger. Has recently delivered eighteen aerial combats at short distance. May 24 at daybreak he attacked and destroyed an enemy aeroplane. The same evening he attacked a group of three German machines and pursued them from four thousand metres down to one thousand metres of altitude. Painfully wounded during the combat, he succeeded, thanks to his daring and his energy in bringing into our lines his gravely hit aeroplane, and landed normally. Already twice cited in the Order of the Day.

This nomination carries with it the *Croix de Guerre* with Palm.

Kiffin Rockwell was promoted sergeant, and was awarded the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre* with palm. His citation, signed by General Joffre, read:

A volunteer for the duration of the war, was first wounded May 9, 1915, during a bayonet charge. Passed into the Aviation, he has there shown himself to be a courageous and skilful pilot. On May 18, 1916, he attacked and destroyed a German aeroplane. May 24, 1916, he did

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not hesitate to deliver combat to several enemy machines, during the course of which he was gravely wounded in the face.

Victor Chapman was made a sergeant, and was awarded the *Croix de Guerre*, with a brilliant citation:

An American citizen, enlisted voluntarily for the duration of the war. A pilot remarkable for his audacity, throwing himself upon the enemy aeroplanes whatever be the number, and whatever be the altitude. May 24, 1916, attacked alone three German aeroplanes; delivered a combat during which his clothing was traversed by several bullets, and he was wounded in the arm.

Bert Hall also did good work during the early days of the *Escadrille*, and was awarded the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*.

Raoul Lufbery joined the *Escadrille Américaine* at Luxeuil. His friend Marc Pourpe had been killed on December 2, 1914, and, taking a vow of vengeance, he had learned to fly, and had piloted bombing and observation machines all along the front. Lufbery was a daring and cool-headed pilot, and immediately began to gain victories in his little *avion de chasse*.

Clyde Balsley was terribly wounded on June 18, and five days later, on June 23, the *Escadrille* lost its first member by death, Victor Chapman. Kiffin Rockwell told how he fell:

‘Well, I feel very blue to-night. Victor was killed this afternoon. I was the guard here to-day and so didn’t go out over the lines. The captain, Victor, Prince, and Lufbery went out this afternoon. Inside the German lines they attacked five German machines. The captain, Prince, and Lufbery came out all right and came home. But Victor didn’t show up. We were beginning to feel uneasy when a Maurice Farman pilot telephoned that he was there and saw the fight. He said that he saw one of the Nieuports suddenly dive straight down and then the machine break to pieces in air. I figure that Victor was probably hit by a bullet, and that also some of the cables of

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the machine were cut by bullets. When he was hit he probably fell forward on his "broomstick" (or whatever you call in English your *contrôleur*); that would cause the machine to dive, and then if it was weakened by some of the supports being cut would cause what happened. He fell inside the German lines.

'I would like to see every paper in the world pay a tribute to him. There is no question but that Victor had more courage than all the rest of us put together. We were all afraid that he would be killed, and I rooming with him had begged him every night to be more prudent. He would fight every Boche he saw, no matter where or at what odds, and I am sure that he had wounded if not killed several. I have seen him twice right on top of a German, shooting hell out of him, but it was always in their lines, and there being so much fighting here it is impossible to tell always when you bring down a machine. His head wound was not healed [Chapman had been wounded by a bullet in the scalp a few days before his death], yet he insisted on flying anyway, and wouldn't take a rest. The first time he was ever in an aeroplane he went as a passenger clear to Dillingen and dropped a bomb on the station there.

'Since the war, he never received anything in the way of decorations, yet for this one month here he was proposed for two citations: *à l'Ordre de l'Armée*, and for the *Médaille Militaire*.

'As I say, he and I roomed together and flew very much together, so I rather feel it, as I had grown to like him very much. I am afraid it is going to rain to-morrow, but if not, I am going to fly about ten hours, and will do my best to kill one or two Germans for him.'

In a long letter to Victor's parents, Kiffin Rockwell said:

'I wanted to write you at once, and tried to a number of times. But I found it impossible to write full justice to Victor or really to express my sympathy with you. Everything I would

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try to say seemed so weak. So I finally said, "I will just go ahead and work hard, do my best, then if I have accomplished a lot, or been killed in accomplishing it, they will know that I have not forgotten Victor, and that some of his strength of character still lived." There is nothing that I can say to you or any one that will do full credit to him. And every one here that knew him feels the same way.... Victor was one of the very few that had the strongest of ideals, and then had the character to withstand anything that tried to come into his life and kill them. He was just a large, healthy man, full of life and goodness toward life, and could only see the fine, true points in life and in other people. And he was not of the kind that absorbs from other people, but of the kind that gives out. We all had felt his influence and seeing in him a man made us feel a little more like trying to be men ourselves.

'... He died the more glorious death, and at the most glorious time of life to die, especially for him with his ideals. I have never once regretted it for him, as I know he was willing and satisfied to give his life that way if it was necessary, and that he had no fear of death, and there is nothing to fear in death.... You must not feel sorry, but must feel proud and happy.'

Victor Chapman was posthumously cited in the Order of the Army:

A chasing pilot who was a model of audacity, of energy, and of spirit, and forced the admiration of his comrades in the *Escadrille*. Seriously wounded in the head June 17, he asked to not interrupt his service. Several days later he threw himself forward to attack several enemy aeroplanes, and found a glorious death in the course of the struggle.

Victor Chapman was a great-great-grandson of John Jay, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; his father, Mr. John Jay Chapman, the essayist and poet, has been called one of the finest writers of the English language in the

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United States. When told of his son's death, Mr. Chapman said, 'Very well. He died for a noble cause.'

The struggle in the air over the Verdun sector continued relentlessly all summer, and the American aviators vied with their French comrades in heroic devotion and self-sacrifice. Raoul Lufbery received the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre* with this citation:

A model of address and of *sang-froid* and courage. Has distinguished himself by numerous long-distance bombardments and by the combats he delivers daily to the enemy aeroplanes. July 31 he did not hesitate to attack at close range a group of four enemy aeroplanes. He shot one of them down near our lines. He succeeded in destroying a second one on August 4, 1916.

Kiffin Rockwell was again cited in Army Orders:

Enlisted for the duration of the war. Entering into the chasing aviation, he immediately classed himself there as a pilot of the very first order, of an admirable daring and bravery. He never hesitates to attack the enemy whatever be the number of the adversaries he encounters, usually obliging the enemy, by the skill and sharpness of his attack, to abandon the struggle. Has destroyed two enemy machines. Has rendered the most valuable services to the *aviation de chasse* of the Army by unsparing efforts during four months at Verdun.

Paul Pavelka had completed his training as an airman, and joined the *Escadrille* at Verdun on August 11. On one of his very first flights over the lines, his aeroplane caught fire, and for several minutes he thought he was going to be burned alive. By skilful piloting and rare good fortune, he succeeded in landing the flaming machine in a marsh near Verdun, and in spite of an enemy bombardment got away safely.

Sergeant James R. McConnell, one of the original members of the *Escadrille*, was badly injured in an aeroplane smash-up. With four comrades, he had been patrolling the air during a hot battle around Fleury and Thiaumont, to prevent the German

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machines from doing observation work. Several German aeroplanes hung low behind their lines under the protection of their anti-aircraft cannon waiting for the French machines to leave the air, but the French and American pilots stuck to their post until darkness fell and the stars were out. Then they started to return to camp.

On the way home McConnell's motor went wrong while he was high in the air. He descended immediately, trying to choose a safe landing. The country was new to him, and in the darkness he ran into telegraph wires. The machine smashed badly, and he was thrown out and shaken up. His back was sprained and became more painful every day, although he kept on flying. Finally Captain Thénault, his commander, ordered McConnell to see the doctor, who hastened the devoted American to the hospital.

Victor Chapman's Peruvian comrade in the *Troisième de Marche*, José Garcia Calderon, was slain over Verdun as he fought in his aeroplane against an overwhelming number of German pilots. George Preston Ames left the ranks of the Legion and entered the aviation school at Camp d'Avord.

William Thaw returned to the front, and attempted to fly with his arm still in a sling. Lufbery on August 8 brought down his fourth enemy aeroplane, which fell in flames near Douaumont, and other members of the *Escadrille* won victories. The Franco-British offensive in the Somme caused the German efforts against Verdun to diminish in intensity: the danger was ended there, and the *Escadrille Américaine* was ordered back to Luxeuil, to protect the great bombing raids that were to be carried out from the base there.

By way of a farewell to Verdun, Kiffin Rockwell destroyed another German aeroplane over Vauquois on September 9. He wrote of this victory: 'Just a few lines. We have not left yet, but hope to be in Paris in a couple of days. This morning I attacked a Boche at three thousand metres high, killed the

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observateur the first shot. After that, followed the machine down to eighteen hundred metres, riddling it with bullets. At that height I was attacked at very close range by two other German machines. I succeeded in getting back home. My first machine fell just in the German trenches, and our artillery fired on it.'

Kiffin Rockwell was proposed for another citation, and for the rank of *sous-lieutenant*. The *Escadrille* spent a few days in Paris, *en route* to Luxeuil. Some of the boys formed a syndicate and bought a four-months-old lion cub from a Brazilian dentist whose clients were frightened by the animal's roars. The cub was named 'Whiskey,' and became the treasured mascot of the *Escadrille*.

The American *Escadrille* arrived back at Luxeuil on September 18. The weather was cold and bad, and there was no flying. New aeroplanes were given some of the pilots, and were mounted with two mitrailleuses, instead of one as the old machines had.

Sergeant-Pilot James Rogers McConnell told in his book, 'Flying for France,' of how the second member of the *Escadrille* was killed:

'Kiffin Rockwell and Lufbery were the first to get their new machines ready and on the 23d of September went out for the first flight since the *Escadrille* had arrived at Luxeuil. They became separated in the air, but each flew on alone, which was a dangerous thing to do in the Alsace sector. There is but little fighting in the trenches there, but great air activity. Due to the British and French squadrons at Luxeuil, and the threat their presence implied, the Germans had to oppose them by a large fleet of fighting machines. I believe there were more than forty Fokkers alone in the camps of Colmar and Habsheim. Observation machines protected by two or three fighting planes would venture far into our lines. It is something the Germans dare not do on any other part of the front. They had a special trick that consisted in sending a large, slow observation ma-



KIFFIN YATES ROCKWELL



VICTOR CHAPMAN
Wounded in the head a few days before he was killed

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chine into our lines to invite attack. When a French plane would dive after it, two Fokkers, that had been hovering high overhead, would drop on the tail of the Frenchman and he stood but small chance if caught in the trap.

‘Just before Kiffin Rockwell reached the lines, he spied a German machine under him, flying at eleven thousand feet. I can imagine the satisfaction he felt in at last catching an enemy plane in our lines. Rockwell had fought more combats than the rest of us put together, and had shot down many German planes that had fallen in their lines, but this was the first time he had had an opportunity of bringing down a Boche in our territory.

‘A captain, the commandant of an Alsatian village, watched the aerial battle through his field glasses. He said that Rockwell approached so close to the enemy that he thought there would be a collision. The German craft, which carried two machine guns, had opened a rapid fire when Rockwell started his dive. He plunged through the stream of lead, and only when very close to his enemy did he begin shooting. For a second it looked as though the German was falling, so the captain said, but then he saw the French machine turn rapidly nose down, the wings of one side broke off and fluttered in the wake of the airplane, which hurtled earthward in a rapid drop. It crashed into the ground in a small field — a field of flowers — a few hundred yards back of the trenches. It was not more than two and a half miles from the spot where Rockwell, in the month of May, brought down his first enemy machine. The Germans immediately opened up on the wreck with artillery fire. In spite of the bursting shrapnel, gunners from a near-by battery rushed out and recovered poor Rockwell’s broken body. There was a hideous wound in his chest where an explosive bullet had torn through. A surgeon who examined the body testified that if it had been an ordinary bullet Rockwell would have had an even chance of landing with only a bad

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wound. As it was, he was killed the instant the unlawful missile exploded.

'Lufbery engaged a German craft, but before he could get to close range two Fokkers swooped down from behind and filled his aeroplane full of holes. Exhausting his ammunition he landed at Fontaine, an aviation field near the lines. There he learned of Rockwell's death and was told that two other French machines had been brought down within the hour. He ordered his gasoline tank filled, procured a full band of cartridges and soared up into the air to avenge his comrade. He sped up and down the lines, and made a wide *détour* to Habsheim where the Germans have an aviation field, but all to no avail. Not a Boche was in the air.

'The news of Rockwell's death was telephoned to the *Escadrille*. The captain, lieutenant, and a couple of men jumped in a staff car and hastened to where he had fallen. On their return the American pilots were convened in a room of the hotel, and the news was broken to them. With tears in his eyes, the captain said: "The best and bravest of us all is no more."

'No greater blow could have befallen the *Escadrille*. Kiffin was its soul. He was loved and looked up to not only by every man in our flying corps, but by every one who knew him. Kiffin was imbued with the spirit of the cause for which he fought and gave his heart and soul to the performance of his duty. He said: "I pay my part for Lafayette and Rochambeau," and he gave the fullest measure. The old flame of chivalry burned brightly in this boy's fine and sensitive being. With his death France lost one of her most valuable pilots. When he was over the lines the Germans did not pass — and he was over them most of the time. He brought down four enemy planes that were credited to him officially, and Lieutenant de Laage, who was his fighting partner, says he is convinced that Rockwell accounted for many others which fell too

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far within the German lines to be observed. Rockwell had been given the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*, on the ribbon of which he wore four palms, representing the four magnificent citations he had received in the Order of the Army. As a further reward for his excellent work he had been proposed for promotion from the grade of sergeant to that of second lieutenant. Unfortunately the official order did not arrive until a few days following his death.

'The night before Rockwell was killed he had stated that if he were brought down he would like to be buried where he fell. It was impossible, however, to place him in a grave so near the trenches. His body was draped in a French flag and brought back to Luxeuil. He was given a funeral worthy of a general. His brother, Paul, who had fought in the Legion with him, and who had been rendered unfit for service by a wound, was granted permission to attend the obsequies. Pilots from all near-by camps flew over to render homage to Rockwell's remains. Every Frenchman in the aviation at Luxeuil marched behind the bier. The British pilots, followed by a detachment of five hundred of their men, and a battalion of French troops brought up the rear. As the slow-moving procession of blue- and khaki-clad men passed from the church to the graveyard, aeroplanes circled at a feeble height overhead and showered down myriads of flowers.'

Mr. John Chapman cabled Paul Rockwell: 'Victor's soul is but a little way above Kiffin's head, and waits for his to keep him company.'

General Joffre signed a posthumous citation of the fallen aviator:

Kiffin Yates Rockwell, an American pilot who ceaselessly won the admiration of his chiefs and his comrades by his *sang-froid*, his courage and his daring. Fatally wounded in the course of an aerial attack, September 23, 1916.

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The *Escadrille* protected a monster bombing raid across the Rhine on October 12, and took part in an aerial battle in which hundreds of Allied and German planes were engaged. Lufbery destroyed his fifth enemy aeroplane, and won the honor of having his name cited in the Official *Communiqué* of the French Army. He was promoted *adjudant*, and decorated with the Legion of Honor. His citation read:

Enlisted under the French flag for the duration of the war. Has given proof as a *pilote de chasse* of remarkable daring, and has brought down up to December 27, 1916, six enemy aeroplanes.

The *Escadrille* moved to the Somme for the winter, and was joined at its frozen, wind-swept camp by Soubiran, Genêt, and Dugan, who had obtained their flying *brevets*. Zinn and Rocle joined other *escadrilles* at the front; they had been found inapt at the aviation schools as pilots, and had trained as machine-gunners and aerial observers. In addition, Zinn had specialized in aerial photography.

Dennis Dowd had shown great promise as an airman at the Buc training school. He got through the ground work there rapidly, and started making trial flights for his *brevet*. Early in August he started on an altitude test, and had reached a height of some seventeen hundred metres, when his machine began falling.

Some of Dowd's comrades saw the aeroplane fall behind a clump of trees, and dashed forward, with the fear that they would find a wrecked aeroplane and a dead or injured pilot. Before they reached the trees, they saw Dowd's machine rise just over the topmost branches, and make a safe landing on the aviation field. The pilot had regained control of his aeroplane just as it actually grazed the tips of oats in a cultivated field, and had succeeded in saving himself.

A few days later, on August 12, 1916, Dowd was killed when his aeroplane fell from a great height. What went wrong in the

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air was never determined, but it was supposed that the American fainted when he reached a high altitude.

There is a widespread belief, fostered by fiction writers, that the Foreign Legion is filled with men who have been disappointed in love. In fact, there are probably very few such men on the roster of the corps, although Dennis Dowd might be considered as having enlisted because of an unfortunate love affair.

When Dowd first came to the Legion in August, 1914, he was an exceptionally cynical, sombre, and bitter youth. As the weeks went by, he became more and more cheerful and gay, and his normal self. At the time of his death he was one of the happiest, most enthusiastic American volunteers in France.

The secret of Dowd's sadness in 1914 and of his gradual change to brightness was learned by Paul Rockwell years after the war. During the summer of 1925, Rockwell met at a dinner-party in Washington the young wife of an American naval officer. She asked many questions about Dowd, and finally related that she had known him when he was a student at Georgetown University, and had become engaged to him his last year there.

Dowd kept pressing her to marry him, but she was thinking more about a 'good time' than matrimony, and kept postponing the wedding. Finally, during the summer of 1914, Dowd came to the seaside resort where his fiancée was staying, and insisted that the engagement be announced and the marriage take place in the fall. He argued that he had finished his studies, was practicing law, and besides had enough independent income to make their future assured.

The girl refused to give a definite answer.

'All right,' said Dowd. 'I am returning to New York. If I do not hear from you within a week that our wedding will

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take place next October, I will sail for France, enlist in the Foreign Legion, and probably be killed in the war.'

The fiancée wrote Dowd a very vague letter. A few days later, she received an answer from Dowd, mailed off Sandy Hook, which said that he was *en route* for France and the Legion. She tried to get in touch with Dowd in Paris, and offered to marry him if he would return to America, but he replied that he was already in the Army.

Other letters told her that he had at last found his path in life, and that he was happy in the Legion at the front. He asked her to think of him only as a friend. She then became engaged to the naval officer she later married.

When Dowd was wounded and in hospital, a young French girl living near Paris got his address, and started a correspondence with him. She adopted him as her *filleul* (war godson) and sent him parcels of comforts. Her parents invited Dowd to spend his convalescence leave at their home. Within forty-eight hours after he arrived there, Dowd was engaged to the girl. They planned to marry as soon as the war ended.

When Dowd was killed, a funeral service for him was held at the American church in Paris. His French fiancée was there, dressed in deepest mourning. After the ceremony, she had herself photographed draped gracefully over Dowd's flag-covered coffin, and swore eternal fidelity to his memory.

Some months later she married an artillery captain in the A.E.F.

Chapter XII

THE 'SWALLOWS OF DEATH' IN THE SOMME AND ALSACE

THE One Hundred and Seventieth Line Regiment, with its ranks refilled and its men rested from the fighting around Verdun, marched up to the Somme battlefield early in August, 1916. The French and British forces were continuing their assaults against the German positions with as great vigor as in July, and the enemy divisions were defending themselves tooth and nail. The conquered terrain was difficult to organize against the German counter-attacks: the preliminary bombardment had done its work all too well, and the old German trenches and shelters were battered almost beyond repair.

Of the score of men who had transferred from the Legion in October, 1915, only six remained in the ranks of the One Hundred and Seventieth: Lieutenant Mulhauser; Sergeant Jacob; Corporals Capdevielle and Dupont; David King and Elov Nilson. The latter wrote of the Somme battle:

'At Etinehem, a little village twelve kilometres back from the old line, we saw for the first time the really marvellous preparations for the big battle of Picardy, and got new ideas of what modern warfare is.

'Through the village ran a narrow-gauge railway, especially built for transporting shells. Every ten minutes a little steam engine puffed by, dragging half a dozen or more cars loaded with shells of every calibre, from the little "French Army's Pride" — the famous seventy-fives — up to the monsters for the two hundred and eighties, three hundred and twenties, and

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even larger guns. We heard continually a bombardment that caused the earth to tremble like an earthquake, even there, twelve or fifteen kilometres from the firing line.

'Behind each hospital was its own graveyard. In these cemeteries German prisoners were occupied at grave-digging. I spoke with these men. Most of them were taken at Herbécourt and Belloy-en-Santerre, at the beginning of the offensive. Speaking of the attack, they said it was terrible, especially the bombardment preceding the assault. One man said that of his battalion one thousand strong, only one officer and eighty-two men escaped alive.

"We all gave it up when we saw what troops were in front of us," another man told me.

'To my question as to what regiment had attacked, he answered, "The Foreign Legion."

'On August 11 came the order to leave Etinehem, and off we went toward the front lines. The nearer the front we got, the more signs of actual fighting we saw. Little was left of the villages through which we passed. We saw many British troops, but no civilians after we left Bray, a village five kilometres behind the old first line. The only building there that was not shell-scarred was the church. In all the other bombarded villages I have seen, the church has always been the worst smashed-up of all the buildings.

'At Suzanne, outside which town the old line, before the offensive started, passed, we made our *grande halte*, had hot *soupe*, and received extra cartridges which made a total of two hundred per man. Each soldier also received four hand grenades.

'We started off at midnight toward the firing line. At dawn we were up and *en route* for the first-line trenches, pick and shovel in hand. Our task was to dig communication trenches between the first- and second-line trenches, a work much needed, as the existing *boyaux* were at places only a foot and a half deep.

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'We had no more than started to dig than the Boches spotted us, and in ten minutes' time shells from their seventy-sevens and one hundred and fives began to fall all about where we were working. Flat on our stomachs we threw ourselves. Now and then I glanced behind me to see how David King was faring, and always I found him too busy with his camera to pay any attention to the bombardment. Every time a shell fell anywhere near us, "snap" went the shutter of that camera.

'One large shell landed, I am sure, not more than two metres to the side of us. I thought surely King was done for: then I heard him shout, "Don't move! Don't move! That's a good one!" And he snapped me there in the new-made shell-hole!

'To work under such conditions was impossible, and we were ordered back to our first *boyaux*. We tried to sleep and get fit for the afternoon's attack. At three o'clock came the order to equip ourselves for the charge. We were told to leave our packs behind, to be in as light a condition as possible for marching. Each man took his tent cover and swung it over his shoulders, and with our two hundred cartridges, *haversacks* filled with two days' emergency food, and a supply of hand grenades, we had all we cared to carry. Then we started off for the first line, all in a happy mood.

'Every hundred metres of our advance we threw ourselves flat down for a little rest. The din of the battle was terrific, a mad blend of shouting, exploding shells, rifle firing and what not from both French and German throats and guns.

'Then came the turn for us to go out from our shelters and join in the advance. Up we sprang and followed the first wave of attackers. The bombardment was then at its highest pitch, and was the most horrible I had yet heard or seen — worse than either Champagne or Verdun.

'As we went forward with a rush many lads of my section fell out, killed or wounded. On we went, over the shell-butchered fields, constantly walking over dead bodies or meet-

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ing wounded men rushing back to the dressing-post. In groups of fifty and a hundred, prisoners trotted past us, guarded by only one or two French soldiers.

'Now the attack in itself ended. We had gone as far as we had been ordered to go, and had reached and taken the foe's second line. My regiment had advanced about a mile and taken more than six hundred prisoners, four machine guns and several trench mortars. Our losses had been slight, but the worst part of the fight was only beginning.

'We, as reserves, started to dig ourselves in, there in the open field, about four hundred metres behind the newly occupied German position. Shells were falling at a rapid rate, and we hustled at our work, as each man must make his own shell-proof dugout. Our picks and shovels, which we had never once abandoned, were small, and work was necessarily slow. King and I luckily found a deep shell-hole, and we hastily filled our sandbags and erected a sort of parapet. Then we crept over to the smashed-in German dugouts and found several more sandbags and an axe. With the axe we chopped up a fallen telephone pole into lengths just right to make a roof for our new home, and, putting on a yard deep covering of earth, we had one of the best shelters in our company.

'The next night, we had to go up to the front line and work, under a heavy bombardment. Finally the shelling became too intense and we had to run to shelter. I tried to go into a dugout, but it was already full of men. I lay down in the doorway and another soldier ran up and fell headlong on top of me. The position was uncomfortable, but I lay there until things quieted down a bit.

'Then I told the man on my back to get up, but he did not stir. I got angry and began shouting at him. Still he did not move. Then I pushed him aside and he fell limp on the ground. I examined him and found he was dead. He had a shrapnel bullet right through the forehead and his back was almost torn

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open by a shell-splinter. If he had not been lying on me, I should have been hit by that very piece of shell. Taking my pick and shovel I dug him a grave.'

The One Hundred and Seventieth moved back just behind the lines for a short rest. The regiment was awarded the *fourragère* and cited for the second time in Army Orders:

August 12, 1916, under the orders of Colonel Lavigne-Delville, took, in a quarter of an hour, under an intense artillery and mitrailleuse fire, a powerfully organized line of trenches, situated at nine hundred metres from its departure base and preceded by numerous redoubts whose conquest exacted furious hand-to-hand fighting; captured there two hundred and fifty prisoners and four machine guns. Organized and conserved the conquered terrain, despite the offensive returns and violent bombardments of the enemy.

New men arrived from the regimental *dépôt*, and the One Hundred and Seventieth went back up to the battle-front. It again acted first as reserve, and occupied a large ruined village, where not a wall two feet high was left standing. There were no trenches and no dugouts: the men improvised shelters in a veritable chaos of bricks, woodwork, and upturned soil, where unburied bodies of French and German soldiers lay scattered everywhere. Nilson found a deep shell-hole, and, gathering a score of abandoned rifles, made a roof, which he strengthened with earth-filled sandbags and old haversacks. On top of his 'happy home,' as he called it, he put part of the old tower of the village church.

On September 12 Nilson wrote: 'We are in for big game to-night. We attack before sundown, but I am cool as a cucumber. I am glad of the coming excitement, for war is a great sport. Will write you to-morrow if I am lucky.'

The One Hundred and Seventieth charged the German positions along the route from Béthune to Bouchavesnes. Nilson fell wounded in a ravine near the first-line trenches; he bandaged

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his hurt, and started to crawl to the rear. He had to cross an exposed hillock which was enfiladed by German machine guns, and there he was riddled by bullets. After the attack, Jacob and Capdevielle searched for Nilson's body in and around the ravine where Nilson had last been seen, but the enemy bombardment had wiped out all trace of the men who fell there.

David King had been injured during the fighting, and was sent to the hospital. After the doctors there finished with him, he was transferred to the Artillery.

Ferdinand Capdevielle was promoted sergeant for continuous *sang-froid* and bravery throughout the fighting, and Mulhauser was cited in Army Orders as having taken part with his regiment in the operations in the Somme, 'where he accomplished in the best manner missions confided to him.'

The One Hundred and Seventieth consolidated the positions which it had conquered, and settled down to another winter in the trenches.

2

When John Bowe and Jack Cordonnier came out of the hospital after their wounds were cured (see Chapter IX), they were sent to the One Hundred and Sixty-Third Infantry Regiment, a unit composed almost entirely of men from Southern France. Most had been enfeebled from bad wounds, or were not quite young enough to be in an attack regiment, but were steady and dependable to hold trenches.

The One Hundred and Sixty-Third was holding a position along the crests of the Vosges Mountains in Alsace when the Americans joined it. John Bowe wrote of the life there:

'I told you we were in a tranquil sector. Just to show you how peaceful it is, I can point out that, on my return here from my eight days' leave of absence, I found that four of my best

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friends had been killed while I was away. We are holding a mountain-top along the frontier. The Germans hold the peaks opposite, which they have planted with heavy artillery and which they practise on us. When the French first drove back the Germans, our lines stopped within a bombing distance of about thirty metres. We have the upper line; they the lower. We can throw bombs down on them, but it is hard for them to throw any on us.

‘Now they have planted their lines with mortars that throw *crapouillots* and bombs the size of a stovepipe. They have another bomb, for all the world like a two-gallon demijohn. We can see them come hurtling through the air and we dodge them. They are only good for short ranges. They have this short-range combination and long-range artillery from the mountains going at the same time. They shot us up for four days and nights; they turned our mountain-top upside down. One couldn’t see where the trenches had been; hills appeared where holes were. The surface of the ground to-day looks like an angry, choppy sea. We were laying for them, however, and when their infantry started out we gave them a dose that made them quit for two whole days, during which things were quiet. Then our artillery started, and recorded hits throughout the day.

‘Late in the afternoon we broke the backbone of the enemy’s blockhouse. A section of our men advanced and gave the Germans inside the blockhouse a chance to surrender. Eleven took advantage of the opportunity and our grenades and revolvers squared up the rest. Prisoners said there were some forty-five men in the blockhouse at the start. Only two of our men were wounded.

‘This affair made the Germans so angry that they threw at us ammunition which they had been trying to save. They shelled us for a whole day and then made a counter-attack with grenades. I was one of the outpost within twenty metres of

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their line. After a lively skirmish we made them get back under cover.

'Later a comrade and I were detailed to take a sack of hand grenades and wait for the Germans to attack again. This looks like a small affair, but two determined men in a commanding position, with sufficient bombs, may prove a dangerous obstacle. There were two other grenadiers some distance on our left.'

The position the One Hundred and Sixty-Third was holding was on the famous Hartmannsweilerkopf, in the struggle for which peak, valuable as an observatory from which the wide plain of Alsace is seen, some fifty thousand French and German soldiers were killed. Kiffin Rockwell's aeroplane fell just at the foot of the mountain, and Bowe and Cordonnier witnessed the last fight of their old comrade of the Legion.

John Bowe was decorated in Alsace with the *Croix de Guerre*, with a magnificent citation:

An American citizen, voluntarily active in the Army, he is the personification of the most absolute devotion. At the front since May 29, 1915, he has always volunteered for dangerous missions and the most perilous posts.

Bowe also received the Serbian War Cross; he was recommended for the decoration by Serbians with whom he had served in the Legion, and who had become officers in the Serbian Army.

Weakened by rheumatism, Bowe was transferred early in 1917 to the Ninety-Second Territorial Regiment, where he worked behind the lines with elderly reservists aged from forty to fifty-five years. He helped build roads, dig trenches, unloaded coal and other supplies at the railway stations behind the lines, and performed other unromantic duties.

'One night at Bussang, after unloading coal in a snowstorm, my wet cotton gloves were as stiff with frost as were my knees

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with rheumatism,' related Bowe. 'Quite fed up, I went to the doctor, determined to thrash the matter out with him. "Yes," he responded, "I know you are not in condition, but we are hard pressed now. We must use every ounce of energy we have." I quit knocking, stuck it out a few days longer, then went to pieces.'

Bowe was sent to the hospital, where he lay in bed for many months, while Cordonnier fought on, the lone American in the One Hundred and Sixty-Third.

3

Algernon Charles Sartoris, a grandson of General Ulysses S. Grant, enlisted in the Foreign Legion in December, 1916. His mother was Nellie Grant, who married Captain Algernon Sartoris, and he had served on the staff of General Fitzhugh Lee as a captain in the United States Army, during the Spanish-American War. Later he entered the diplomatic service, and was at one time Chargé d'Affaires of the Legation at Guatemala. Some time after he volunteered Sartoris wrote:

'From the moment the war broke out, it had been my intention to serve the Allied cause, and in the very early days of the struggle I passed my examination at the London War Office for an interpretership, but the French Government undertook all these appointments before my turn was reached, so my efforts in that direction failed. Then all my business affairs went wrong and I was compelled to cross and recross the ocean and make many other voyages. Finally I decided to wait, thinking and believing that it could only be a question of time before the United States would intervene. The Lusitania horror, followed by many other examples of Hun "Kultur," led me to the conclusion that it would be a long time, if ever, before President Wilson would intervene. The Sussex affair clinched it, so far as I was concerned, and finally, despairing of

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my own country doing her duty, like many other Americans I decided to enlist in the French Army and "do my bit."

'The only door open was the famous Foreign Legion. I felt a bit nervous in engaging myself as a common soldier in a corps, which I knew contained a very mixed lot of men, but it was the only way and I took the plunge. I was sent to Lyon to the *dépôt*, a most depressing spot, but remained only a few days and then went on to train at the camp at La Valbonne.

'I shall never forget my first impression there. To begin with, at one end of the long barrack-room in which I was lodged, was a corporal explaining and demonstrating the use of the bayonet. A regular babel of languages, shouted at the top of their respective voices, greeted me as I entered. The predominant languages used were German and Spanish, the latter of which I understand a little. At the other end of the wooden shed, or barrack, a lively debate was going on between a French Colonial Negro and an Uruguayan gentleman; this argument developed rapidly, and sides were taken by the majority present, the men of Spanish tongue rallying around the Uruguayan; the German-Swiss, I know not for what reason, seemed to favor the nigger. Then a blow followed, and the Spaniards to a man rushed for their guns and bayonets.

'Personally, together with another American, Gaston Mayer by name, I managed to get out of a door and wait in the company street until order was restored by the firm and gallant attitude of the corporal, whom I had noticed on entering. He was, I was informed later, of Alsatian extraction. It was a near call and might have been a nasty business. I began to wonder if I had not taken more on my shoulders than I could carry, but little Mayer reassured me, said I would gradually get used to it and comforted me in general. Among the other men, too, I found a certain rough kindness.

'I was destined to remain at La Valbonne a very considerable time. As to the training and methods prevailing there I will

The Swallows in the Somme and Alsace

not speak in detail. I will say that the officers and non-commissioned officers change too frequently, so that, as each one has his own ideas as to the proper way to do things, we men, having learnt at the hands of one man how to use our bayonets, for example, would have to unlearn all we had learnt, and do the same thing in a way that better pleased a new arrival, and this *ad libitum*. It was exercise, however. I would like to say *en passant* that, so far as I am able to judge, the officers, as a whole, know their business and endeavor to be fair.'

Sartoris was already past middle age. He had no gift for the soldier's life, but he had inherited from his grandfather that former President's chief failing, which caused him to make the acquaintance of La Valbonne jail more than once. Sartoris struggled with all his might to become a good soldier, however, and was finally declared fit for service in the trenches.

Other late 1916 American volunteers were Gaston R. Marcel Mayer, who was born in New Haven, Connecticut, but whose family lived in New York, who enlisted at Bordeaux on August 31; William Paringfield, a nineteen-year-old lad from Butte, Montana, who enlisted at Bayonne on December 15, and Schuyler Deming, of Columbus, Ohio, who enlisted at Marseille on November 18.

Deming deserted from La Valbonne after several months there, but was caught and court-martialled. He explained to the court that he had enlisted in the Legion in order to get quickly into action against the Germans, and had deserted because he found the time of the training camp too long. He was pardoned and sent to the front with the first reënforcements to go up after his trial.

Milton Wright, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, came to La Valbonne from Bordeaux, where he had enlisted. Wright had arrived at that port as a sailor on a freight vessel, and went ashore without any identification papers, to take a look at the city. He was picked up by the police, and as he spoke no French

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and could not explain who he was, he was locked up until an interpreter could be found. Then Wright explained that he was a sailor from a certain ship, and declared that his captain would vouch for him. He was taken under guard to the boat; the captain owed him several months' wages, and swore he had never laid eyes on Wright before.

The American was marched back to prison and accused of being a spy. He protested his innocence, and proclaimed his willingness to fight for France against Germany. He was taken to the recruitment bureau and there signed an enlistment of five years in the Foreign Legion.

Wright had no liking for the military life, however, and at La Valbonne became day by day more melancholic. He could not learn to drill, and finally was discharged from the Legion, and given a railroad ticket to Boulogne.

Chapter XIII

CHAMPAGNE AND AISNE, 1917

THE Legion remained in the trenches guarding the park and the ruins of the once magnificent château of Plessier-du-Roye, from the end of July until early October, 1916. There was very little activity, except the usual daily bombardment, patrol combats, and an occasional *coup de main* (trench raid). The *coup de main* was a newly developed form of warfare, used all along the front, but mostly in so-called quiet sectors, by both the Germans and the Allies, to hinder the opponent and gain information about his activities. It was always operated very suddenly: a short but intense bombardment would be directed against a line of enemy trenches or a troublesome blockhouse, and while the defenders of the shelled position were still dazed, a picked band of men would dash over, kill or capture all the defenders, blow up any works that might have escaped the shells, and return home with the prisoners. A heavy barrage of shrapnel always prevented aid from reaching the attacked position before it was too late, and the *coups de main* were often executed with few casualties among the assailants. Such was not the case, however, when machine-gun nests escaped the destructive bombardment.

Billy Thorin was badly shaken up and gassed by a shell explosion in August, and taken away to the hospital. There it was discovered that he had contracted tuberculosis: the long stay in the damp dungeon at Lyon, coming before he was fully recovered from his Champagne battle wounds, had been too much for him. Billy was transferred to a sanatorium for

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soldiers with lung trouble, and there began a gallant struggle for life.

Sergeant Boulogny frequently went out on night patrol, and investigated the enemy's works around ruined Lassigny and in the woods at the foot of the Plémont; twice he brought back prisoners he had captured single-handed. Ivan Nock, Arthur Barry, and Jack Moyet won the notice of their chiefs, as they always volunteered for the *coups de main*.

The month of October was spent around Crèvecœur. New men arrived from La Valbonne, and the autumn days were spent drilling, and practicing grenade-throwing and the manipulation of the rifle-machine guns, more and more of which were distributed.

On November 5 the Legion went into the trenches in the Somme, in the very sector where it had attacked in July, and took over the line Dompierre-Becquincourt Mill-Assevillers-Belloy-en-Santerre. Some of the boys looked for the grave in which had been laid the remains of Alan Seeger and their other comrades, but so greatly had the enemy bombardment transformed the landscape that not even the hill on which it had been dug could be found.

The Legionnaires made the acquaintance of the terrible mud of the Somme. Their entire sector became a muddy swamp, through which it took two hours to march one kilometre. The *Ravin de la Mort* ('Death Ravine') became celebrated because of the number of men who were mired in it; if help was not quickly forthcoming to pull them out, they would sink to their death.

In this icy quagmire the Legionnaires lived and worked, under an incessant bombardment. They dug trenches and *boyaux*, and created underground shelters of a sort; they lugged up from the rear fifty kilogram bombs for the trench mortars, and created *dépôts* of supplies for the projected spring offensive. It required an unusual supply of courage and good will and cheer-

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fulness to endure such an existence, and the main consolation of the Legionnaires was the knowledge that the life of the enemy across the way was just as wretched.

The Germans posted up in front of the Legion's trenches notices written in French, urging the Legionnaires to disband and go home. The notice ended:

‘Germany has no corps of foreign volunteers, and France should not have one.’

The Legion did not disband, and a few days later another notice was posted up:

‘Men of the Foreign Legion: Hereafter when we capture one of you we will hang you instead of shoot you. You are not worth a bullet.’

The Legion laughed. Some five score nationalities were represented in its ranks, and among the men were still a few veteran Austrian and German Legionnaires, covered with medals from African and Tonkin campaigns. There were some sixty Hungarian volunteers, every one of them wounded at least once fighting the Turks at Gallipoli. There were half a hundred Bulgarians, who were facing the Germans with every evidence of hatred of their national ally, and hundreds of Swiss and Spaniards of tried and true courage. There were several Portuguese Royalists, men who had once espoused the cause of their deposed king so ardently that they could not or would not enter the republican army. There were numerous South Americans, including several officers.

Chatkoff was back at the front with the Legion. He had finished his training as an aviator, but feared he would not be sent to the front until spring, and had asked to spend the winter in the trenches with his old corps. ‘For the good of his soul,’ he said.

Arthur Barry wrote of him: ‘The Germans started a gas attack, and my company was ordered to stand ready for a counter-attack. They started across after us, but soon broke

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under our fire and retreated. No one was badly hurt on our side, but the Boches lost plenty of killed and wounded. During the row Chatkoff was struck by a small piece of shrapnel, but he did not return to the hospital. We are now in the rear resting. We are happy to be here, for we were up to our knees in mud in the front-line trenches and wet to the skin constantly.'

Edgar Bouligny received his fourth wound of the war on December 15, and Chatkoff related it: 'Bouligny was wounded in the leg by the explosion of a hand grenade thrown into his trench during a small German raid. He insisted on remaining in the trenches after being hit. On the day following the incident he told a comrade that he was so tired he could hardly stand. On examining his leg it was found that a bad wound had been inflicted and that infection had already set in, so that it was feared the leg would have to be amputated.'

Because of the exposed nature of the terrain and the intense enemy bombardment, Bouligny could not be sent to the rear all that day. When nightfall came, more than twenty-four hours after he had been wounded, the American was carried on the back of a comrade to a field dressing-station. Energetic measures were taken to save his leg, and he was then sent to the American Hospital near Paris.

Bouligny's captain wrote him as follows: 'The same night you were taken from the trenches, I cited you in Army Orders. At last you will have the *Croix de Guerre* you so long have merited. I hope you will soon recover and return, for I like to have with me such under-officers as you.'

Bouligny's citation read:

An excellent non-commissioned officer, energetic and devoted. Wounded in the trench by a fragment of grenade in the left leg, he continued to assume his service throughout the night. He allowed himself to be bandaged the following morning only, and was later evacuated. Has already been wounded.

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Boulogny often before had been promised citations and decorations by his officers, but by some ill fortune they had always been killed or wounded before sending Boulogny's propositions to headquarters.

Robert Whidby was caught wandering behind the lines by gendarmes and taken back to Legion headquarters, where he was charged with attempting to desert and court-martialled. When called upon to explain his action, Whidby produced a certificate that he had been discharged from the United States Army as feeble-minded. The court-martial laughed, and Whidby was dismissed from the Legion.

The Legionnaires spent their third Christmas in the trenches, and on December 26 started on a march back to the rear, reaching Crèvecœur on New Year's Day of 1917. Such was their fatigue, after the frightful cantonments of the Somme and the mud-hole trenches of Belloy, that the barns and lofts in which they were quartered seemed almost a paradise, in spite of the cold and the manœuvres in the snow and fog.

Frederick Zinn and Paul Rockwell visited their old comrades at Crèvecœur toward the end of January. They found an entire corps of the *Armée d'Afrique*, comprising several regiments, cantoned in and around Crèvecœur. The first Legionnaire they met, a little Swiss-German lad who had volunteered in 1914, told them where the Americans were quartered. Most of them were found grouped around a stove while an old peasant woman prepared for them boiling hot *café au lait*. Others were lined up at the regimental canteen, where a fresh supply of Algerian cigarettes was being sold to the Legionnaires at two cents the package of twenty.

The American Legionnaires had become much more clannish than they were in the early months of the war. Months of hardships and common danger had drawn the men close together, and what one had he shared with his comrades. The entire Legion — veterans and volunteers for the duration of

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the war — was imbued with a wonderful *esprit de corps*, and there were no more clashes between national groups or veterans and neophytes. The awkward volunteers of 1914 had become good, campaign-hardened soldiers, well versed in the art of modern warfare, and in such company the newcomer quickly became proficient as a fighter.

Of some threescore and ten American volunteers of 1914 there still remained in the fighting ranks of the Legion Guy Agostini, Jack Casey, Lincoln Chatkoff, Christopher Charles, Louis Haeffle, Theodore Haas, Nick Karayinis, Jack Noe, Robert Percy, Charles Trinkard, and Frank Whitmore. Later volunteers were Arthur Barry, Henry Claude, Jack Moyet, Ivan Nock, and James Paul. In addition, there were a few men in the hospitals and in training at La Valbonne.

Three of the volunteers of 1914, Chatkoff, Noe, and Percy, had never been wounded, although Chatkoff and Percy had both spent months sick in the hospital. Noe had never missed a roll-call, except when away on leave of absence, and held the record among his American comrades for time spent at the front.

Whitmore and Haeffle had but lately rejoined their regiment after months in the hospital from their Belloy-en-Santerre wounds. Haeffle was a musician in the Legion's band; Haas a dispatch-bearer; Trinkard signalman for his company; and Casey regimental topographer. Casey was also in great demand throughout the Legion as an artist; in a few minutes' sitting he could draw a most excellent likeness of his subject, and some of his sketches of trench and battle scenes had been highly praised and published far and wide.

Zinn and Rockwell asked the other Americans to join them for dinner, and while Rockwell went to arrange for the meal Zinn started out to call on some friends he had made when his *escadrille* had been stationed at Crèvecœur. Rockwell waited at the restaurant, and as Zinn was an hour overdue, began



LEGIONNAIRES AT CRÈVECŒUR, JANUARY, 1917

Left to right: James Paul, Paul Rockwell, Jack Casey, Jack Moyet, Arthur Barry



AMERICAN LEGIONNAIRES IN JANUARY, 1917

*Left to right: Arthur Barry, Jack Noe, Henry Claude, Jack Moyet (with flag)
Frederick W. Zinn, James Paul*

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to think there must be some mistake as to the place of rendez-vous.

Suddenly the door of the restaurant opened, and the band of American Legionnaires entered, supporting Zinn, who was in a half-dazed condition. Near the aviation park he had heard a woman screaming for help. He rushed into the house from whence came the cries, and found two men attempting to violate a woman. Zinn at once interfered, and during the fight one of the men hit him over the back of the head with a full bottle of wine.

The assailants then fled; Zinn staggered into the street and tried to pursue them, but fell unconscious in the road. Then his friends came by, and while some of them revived Zinn, others attempted to capture the fugitives, but failed.

Zinn quickly recovered his good spirits, and the dinner was merry enough, despite his close call. Owing to military law the restaurant had to close at nine o'clock and the Legionnaires returned to their cantonment. They were given a holiday the following day, as during practice with a new and very destructive kind of hand grenade, five men had been killed or wounded. All the small streams and ponds around Crèvecœur were frozen almost solid, and the Legionnaires had a great time skating and sliding on the ice.

The Legion returned to the trenches at the end of January, this time in the sector north of Tilloloy, where the *Troisième de Marche* had been the first winter of the war. Lieutenant-Colonel Cot said good-bye to the men he had commanded so well and so long; he had been promoted general, and called to command the Seventieth Infantry Brigade. He was replaced by Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez, a splendid officer who had already commanded the Legion in Africa.

Arthur Barry was wounded and gassed by a shell explosion, and was sent away to the hospital. He was awarded the *Croix de Guerre*, and cited in the Order of the Regiment:

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A courageous and devoted Legionnaire. He was wounded February 6, 1917, at his combat post in a violently bombarded trench.

The Legion changed sectors a few days later. As it entered Montdidier, the Germans began shelling the town, and the inhabitants took refuge in the cellars. Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez ordered the Legion's band to strike up a lively air, and marched at the head of his men through the streets. The civilians came out of their shelters to applaud the Legionnaires.

The French prepared to attack the German lines in March, but the enemy refused the combat, and began slowly falling back to the Hindenburg Line. The Legion formed part of the forces that followed up the retreating foe, and passed through the pillaged and devastated countryside, where every town and village had been wrecked, and the orchards and groves deliberately cut down. The spectacles they witnessed at Roye, Margny-aux-Cerises, Roiglise, and elsewhere along their line of march filled the hearts of the Legionnaires with hatred for the foe and a desire for vengeance.

One American volunteer wrote: 'The Boches have systematically destroyed all the towns and villages abandoned. Where they haven't burned a house, they have made holes through the roofs with pickaxes. All the crossroads are blown up at the junctions, and when the trees bordering the roads haven't been cut down, barricading the roads, they have been cut halfway through, so that when the wind blows they keep falling on the passing convoys. The inhabitants left in these villages are wild with delight and are giving the troops an inspiring reception.'

2

Supporting the French Tenth Army Corps, the Legionnaires pursued the retreating Germans in the Somme until the latter

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established themselves along the powerful Hindenburg Line. Months of preparation would be required before an assault could be made against the enemy works, and at the end of March, the Legion went to the rear, and after a few days of repose, entrained on April 2 for Cuperly, where some of the men had already been, just before and after the great Champagne battle in September, 1915.

Another huge French offensive in Champagne and the Aisne was under preparation. The operation was rendered necessary by the Russian Revolution, the bad situation in Italy, and the entry of the United States into the war. A victory was needed to encourage the civilian population in France, which was beginning to grow uneasy and discouraged because of the way the war dragged along.

The Legion was to engage with the entire Fourth French Army in the assault of the Moronvilliers Heights; its own particular goal was the capture of the village and 'gulf' of Auberive and the advanced Bouleaux Wood salient. The Legionnaires labored for twelve days under a ceaseless bombardment, repairing the earthworks in the sector from which they were to attack, and digging take-off parallels.

The bombardment of the German positions began on April 7, but the destruction of the intricate works in the Auberive 'gulf' was put off until the last moment and entrusted to the trench mortars and bomb-throwers.

Maps of the positions to be captured were distributed to the Legionnaires, and each battalion, each company, each squad knew exactly what was expected of it. The regiment was to operate on most unfavorable terrain: a plateau bordered at the west by a pine wood, but completely bare to the east. Not a movement could be made unseen by the enemy.

The general attack started on April 16, and the entire German first line of defense was taken along all the forty-kilometre front of assault. The Legion tackled the tough morsel assigned

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to it on the following day, and machine-gunner Christopher Charles described the action as follows:

‘Just about the time of the battle, the three battalions of the Legion were scattered in different sectors, so I cannot tell about the corps as a whole. The Third Battalion went into the trenches on the night of the 16th with the First Battalion to the left of us. It rained something fierce that night and the Legionnaires were feeling pretty sore. Their only wish was to go after the Boches at the earliest possible moment and the order finally came.

‘At fifteen minutes to five o’clock on the morning of the 17th, with rain pouring down in bucketfuls, the boys “went over the top” and across the fields. The Germans offered no resistance until their third line was reached. Then our boys started falling. It did not stop us any, and by noon we had gained something like four kilometres in depth along a wide front.

‘Something that is new to us is the way we now have of pushing forward. It is nothing like the battles I have been in before. Formerly we just started forward against the Boches with a rush after our artillery had done its work. But in this battle it was different.

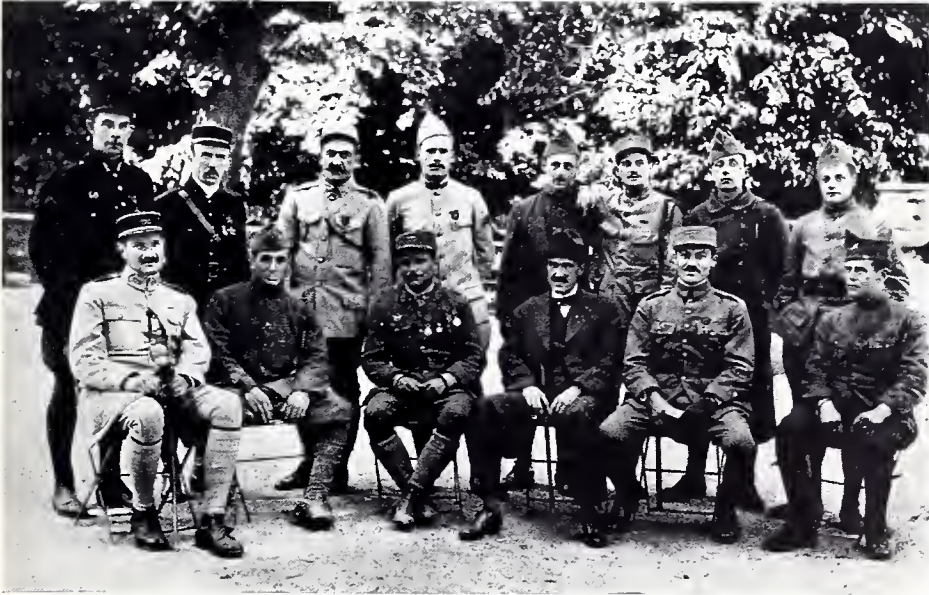
‘First our batteries smashed the German trenches for a few kilometres deep, and when we started forward it was not with a whirlwind dash. Instead, a few score men went out armed with hand grenades. Naturally the Germans started shooting like the mischief when they saw our fellows, but our men were picked and were known to have a lot of nerve. They kept advancing from shell-hole to shell-hole until they were within a few feet of the German positions, when they let fly with the grenades and cleaned out the trenches and shelters. Then the reserves and machine-gun crews came and took possession. The same thing went on from trench to trench.

‘This new method is a fine way of saving men. I cannot say what the losses of the Legion have been here, but they are



DISTRIBUTION OF HAND GRENADES

Before the attack of April 17, 1917. Ivan Nock standing with grenade in his hand



AMERICAN LEGIONNAIRES WHO WANTED TO TRANSFER TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY, JULY 4, 1917

Left to right, standing: Frederick W. Zinn, Adjutant Albanel (Zinn's French pilot), Eugene Jacob, Andrew Walbron (an American from Patterson, N.J., who served throughout the war in a French line regiment and was four times wounded), Christopher Charles, Oscar Mouvet, Jack Moyet, William Paringfield. Seated: Robert Mulhauser, Guy Agostini, Raoul Lufbery, Paul Rockwell, Willis Haviland, Algernon Sartoris

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certainly nothing like what they were at Belloy-en-Santerre last July. But this new way of fighting is far more fatiguing than the dashes we used to make.

‘When we attacked with a rush, we got smashed to a certain extent, but then we would go back for a few days of repose. In the new style of fighting so few are lost that we stay in battle much longer and keep dragging along. This time we were five days advancing continuously, and, believe me, we were pretty tired when it was over.

‘Now, to tell you about the boys:

‘On the 18th, Jack Noe was slightly wounded by a shell explosion: the first time he has been touched in two and a half years at the front.

‘Poor Jimmie Paul was killed after a fine and noble career in the Legion. At two o’clock on the afternoon of the 19th the boys who were picked from our battalion to throw hand grenades were sent forward. In the first wave were Jimmie Paul and Henry Claude. Claude pulled through all right, but Jimmie was not lucky.

‘With Claude he jumped in and started throwing grenades into a sap where there were five Germans. They killed four of them outright, but the fifth threw up his hands and shouted “Kamerad!” Jimmie, good-hearted boy, thought the Boche had surrendered, and so turned to go to a different sap. The moment he turned his back, the Boche picked up a gun and shot poor Jimmie through the heart. Some of us arrived just in time to see the vile trick the German played, and we certainly crucified him.

‘When I arrived, Jimmie lay dead with the German who had killed him by his side. The next day Jimmie was carried back and buried behind the lines with all honors. All regret his death, for he was a brave little lad and an honor to his country and the Legion.

‘Only a few hours after Jimmie’s death, Gaston Mayer, a

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young chap who had just arrived at the front from the *dépôt*, was killed instantly by a shell. Arthur Barry narrowly escaped death from the same explosion. Frank Whitmore, one of the best soldiers here, was badly wounded by a shell the first day of the attack. Ivan Nock was hit in the head by a bullet on the 20th and was carried off the field.

'I am writing this letter in a former German trench a few kilometres behind the present front line. Jack Moyet and Arthur Barry are with me, and both are smiling. Barry, who saw Moyet just before he went into battle, asked him how he liked it. He grinned and said no Boche was born who could "get" him. You know Moyet's style. He is a quiet little lad and looks as if he would not hurt a flea, but he is brave as a lion.'

The First Battalion attacked an important German trench between the T wood and the Sapinière earthworks. Heedless of a driving rain and a regular tempest of wind, the Legionnaires leaped from the sheltering attack parallels, passed at a trot along the paths cut previously through their barbed-wire entanglements, and rushed across the ankle-deep, gluey white Champagne mud of No-Man's-Land toward the German position. They were met with a terrible barrage of machine-gun fire: through an error in the preparatory bombardment, the enemy trenches were still intact. Wire-clippers were used to cut through the German barbed-wire belts, and the khaki-clad sea flowed over into the trench, slowly mastering it with grenade and bayonet.

The losses had been heavy, and to continue its progression, the First Battalion was obliged to call on the reserves of the Third (the Second Battalion was supporting the advance of the Seventh Algerian *Tirailleurs*, and could not aid its comrades of the Legion); the two battalions assaulted together the complicated works in the Bouleaux Woods and the southern part of the Auberive 'gulf.'

The falling of night did not halt for an instant the bitter con-

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flict. The German defenders were vastly superior in number to the attacking Legionnaires, as a number of enemy battalions, who otherwise should not have been there, had taken shelter in the 'gulf' when they had been shelled out of their own positions. The Legionnaires called to each other in the obscurity, and, recognizing friend from foe by the voice, relentlessly continued their progress.

Dawn found the Germans forced back to their second line of defense and the Legion advancing slowly but ceaselessly, although hampered by a blinding snowstorm. The Germans were resisting with all their strength, and the resistance became more and more bitter as Auberive was approached; a capital importance was attached by the enemy to the conservation of that stronghold.

During the day of the 18th, the trenches called by the Germans Byzantium, the Dardanelles, and Prince Eitel, were stormed and carried in spite of a desperate defense with machine guns, lance-flames, grenades, and trench-daggers. Corporal Joseph Phillips was killed as he led his squad to the attack of a machine-gun battery. His body was literally riddled with bullets, but his men speedily avenged him.

In spite of the veritable barriers of death thrown forward by the Germans, the Legion, by sheer force of heroism and self-sacrifice, moved onward.

At daybreak of the 19th the main fort of Auberive was reached. The French artillery had so pitilessly bombarded the position that the Germans finally found it untenable and fled just before the men of the Legion arrived; they left behind their arms, munitions, equipment, and even articles of clothing scattered all about the ground. In the kitchen of the fort was found a huge pot of hot coffee, which was quickly emptied by the famished Legionnaires, who, since April 16, had had almost nothing to eat or drink because of the impossibility of bringing up supplies.

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While a section under the command of a sergeant occupied the fort and hastily began repairing its defenses, the lieutenant commanding the Tenth Company — in which were most of the American volunteers and which was leading the advance — set out with two grenadiers to explore the ruins of Auberive village. He found it empty of Germans. The latter, fearful of being surrounded and forced to surrender, had evacuated the formidable position. For thirty months they had labored at making Auberive impregnable, cutting deep trenches, erecting in the shattered houses concrete platforms for machine-gun emplacements, digging commodious bombproof shelters, strengthening all with a prodigality of reënforced concrete. Many of the heavy steel blockhouses with place inside for two machine-gunners, which commanded all the approaches to the village, were found intact, although bearing the marks of the impact of heavy shells. The irresistible enthusiasm of the Legion had overcome all obstacles.

Patrols discovered that the enemy had fallen back and was concentrating all his energies on the defense of the fort south of Vaudesincourt. This fort defended the salient which it was still the Legion's mission to take.

Reassembling the scattered companies at Auberive, the Legion again prepared to advance. Two hundred and seventy-five of the thousand men of the Third Battalion who had departed to the assault on April 17 were still valid, and about the same number of the First Battalion. Relying on the hand grenade and the rifle-machine gun, the Legion continued forward. Successively the earthworks called by the enemy Posnanie, Bayreuth, and the Labyrinth of Auberive were taken. The fighting was more than ever fierce. The Germans counter-attacked time and again, and more than one section of trench or *boyau* changed hands several times during the day.

During one of the attacks, Corporal John Barret — Alan Seeger's friend — fell wounded, and his comrades were forced

to leave him in the hands of the foe. A short while later, by a brilliant counter-attack, they retook the trench, and found poor Barret's body pinned to the earth by a German bayonet. Rather than leave the wounded Legionnaire to be cared for by his own men, the Germans had murdered him.

In their desperation the Germans tried all manner of ruses to stop the Legion's advance. Without weapons and with heads bared, a group of Germans advanced with hands raised, as if to give themselves up. Unsuspecting, the Legionnaires allowed them to approach. Arrived almost at the Legion's line, the Germans suddenly lowered their arms and hurled the grenades which they had carried hidden in their hands.

There was an instant's panic among the Legionnaires. Then, with rage in their hearts, they rushed upon the treacherous foe. Not one prisoner was made during the short hand-to-hand fight which ensued, and not one German escaped. Shortly after, the *Grand Boyau* was carried, and the fort south of Vau-desincourt then fell into the hands of the Legion.

The Second Battalion had fought with equal tenacity and success; it captured the important Trench 67, which was piled high with German cadavers, blood-bathed munitions, arms, and effects. This trench faced the north, and commanded a narrow valley, along which the enemy constantly sought to send reinforcements. The Germans installed a battery of heavy artillery, supported by numerous infantrymen, within one hundred and fifty metres of the Legion, and shelled the French position at point-blank range.

The lines were so mixed and entangled that it was almost impossible to know the exact whereabouts of friend and foe. During the night of the 20th, a company of the One Hundred and Sixty-Eighth French Line Infantry advanced to relieve the remains of the Sixth and Seventh companies of the Legion. *Adjudant-chef* Mader, a German who had served with the Legion for sixteen years, was watching the German lines and noticed

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there an unusual movement. Looking closely, he discovered that the French infantrymen were walking straight into a trap laid by the Germans occupying a small *fortin* in the valley, and that they had already advanced so far that they could not be warned without causing the enemy to open fire.

Mader hastily gathered together ten Legionnaires who were on guard in the trenches, picked up a few grenades, and rushed along the shallow liaison *boyau* so rapidly that the enemy machine-gunners could not open fire before the Legionnaires had reached the dead angle where they were sheltered from the bullets. The advanced squad of the One Hundred and Sixty-Eighth was now only a few metres from the German *fortin*, and the Germans were already raising their hands to throw their grenades, when the huge Mader sprang upon them. Panic-stricken by the unexpected attack, the Germans abandoned their munitions and *fortin* and fled toward their heavy battery, while Mader in a few words told the French commander the situation.

Without losing a second more, Mader, followed by his ten Legionnaires and sustained by the men of the One Hundred and Sixty-Eighth, jumped into the German saps and started a grenade combat. The Germans sleeping in the shelters awoke and defended themselves with energy, but it was already too late. Within a few minutes the battery of six heavy pieces was captured, and the infantry company supporting it decimated. The battery was turned over to the reserve company of the Seventh *Tirailleurs*, and Mader led his ten men back to their trench.

The Legion had captured all the objective points assigned to it. Chief of Battalion Deville, who was now commanding the regiment, said in his report on the night of the 20th: 'My men are at the end of their forces physically, but their morale is splendid and they refuse to be relieved.'

In four days and nights of incessant fighting, in spite of the weather and mud, the lack of water, the enormous difficulties of

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revictualling, the fatigue, and the sanguinary resistance of the foe, the Legion had defeated two regiments of Saxons, and taken more than seven kilometres of communicating trenches, all by grenade, rifle-machine gun and bayonet fighting. The three battalions of foreign volunteers had captured for France eleven hundred prisoners, twenty-two cannon, fifty-eight trench mortars, forty-seven machine guns, and much ammunition, and had marked their passage by heaps of German corpses.

Such an effort, crowned by such a success, was not possible without great losses, however, and about half the corps was missing at roll-call when the Legion assembled at Mourmelon, where it went for two days' rest after the men were withdrawn from the firing line at dawn of the 21st.

Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez was mortally wounded almost at the onset of the attack. He started forward with his men, and was horribly torn all over the hands, legs, and body by an exploding shell. Before he was carried off the field, he extended his bleeding hands to his officer and Legionnaires, and repeated frequently: '*Bon courage, mes guerriers!*' ('Good courage, my warriors!')

At the commandment post of the Moroccan Division, where the stretcher-bearers first carried him, Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez reported the situation of his troops to Colonel Demetz. 'I excuse myself, my colonel, for having to abandon my fine regiment at such a critical moment. Ah! My Legionnaires are marvellous soldiers!'

After his wounds were dressed, the commander shook hands with a number of wounded Legionnaires, who crowded about him.

'I am badly cut up,' he told them, 'but it doesn't matter; it is for France. We must do our duty. *Vive la Légion!*'

Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez died the morning of the 18th, at a field hospital. His last words were: '*Vive la France! Vive la Légion!*'

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In the same grave with the gallant commander of the Legion was buried the body of Frank E. Whitmore. How that superb fighting American met his death was told in a final citation in French Army Orders:

Wounded and buried by a shell while crossing the barrage fire on April 17, 1917, and having lost consciousness, he rejoined his section as soon as he recovered consciousness. He then went with a wounded comrade to bring in another wounded comrade who lay between the lines under a heavy fire. He was himself mortally wounded that evening.

Captains Leixelard and Peteau were killed, as were Lieutenant Boyer, a Bavarian from Munich who had been for years in the Legion, and seven other lieutenants. Many other officers were wounded, including the popular Captain de Lannurien, who took command of the Third Battalion when Chief of Battalion Deville succeeded Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez in command of the Legion.

The Legion was cited for the fifth time in French Army Orders:

A marvellous regiment which is animated by hatred for the enemy and the very highest spirit of sacrifice.

April 17, 1917, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez, launched itself to the attack of an enemy forewarned and strongly entrenched and captured his first lines. Halted by mitrailleuses and in spite of the disappearance of its chief, mortally wounded, continued the operation under the orders of Chief of Battalion Deville, by an incessant combat day and night, until the point assigned was attained, fighting body to body throughout five days, in spite of heavy losses and considerable difficulty in revictualling; captured from the enemy more than two square kilometres of terrain. Forced, by the vigor of this progression, the Germans to abandon a strongly organized village, where had been broken all our attacks since more than two years.

Another well-merited and rare tribute to the Legion was the



IVAN FINNEY NOCK

The last American volunteer killed fighting in the ranks of the Foreign Legion in the World War

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publication of an account of its taking of Auberive in the official *Bulletin* of the French Armies, a weekly newspaper furnished by the French War Department for circulation among the soldiers in the War Zone. One paragraph of this account read:

In this hell, men of fifty-one nationalities are fighting against the Germans. They are struggling not for the safeguard of a hearth or the conservation of a national patrimony, neither are they mercenaries drawn by high pay or the hope of rich booty; they are there, veterans of the old Legion of Africa or volunteers for the duration of the war, the most humble like the very highest, of all the cultures, the most simple like the most refined, conducted by a single sentiment which dominates them all — hatred for the Germans and love of liberty.

Numerous were the decorations and citations won at Auberive. Ivan Nock was awarded the *Croix de Guerre*, with a glorious citation:

A grenadier of admirable courage. Wounded April 20, 1917, by a bullet in the head, just after he had shot down his fifth German, he exclaimed: 'I will not leave the battlefield until I have killed my sixth Boche!' He kept his word.

Henry Claude received the *Croix de Guerre*, with a citation which called him 'a remarkable grenadier, who gave proof of particular daring during the offensive movement of April 20.'

The same medal, accompanied by worthy citations, was awarded to Corporal Guy Agostini, Christopher Charles, Theodore Haas, and Jack Noe. Nick Karayinis won his second citation in the Order of the Day:

A very brave Legionnaire. On April 19, 1917, he carried himself with great gallantry during the assault on a strongly fortified hostile post, and by his hard fighting contributed to the capture of the position.

Lieutenant Nazare-Aga was cited as 'a volunteer who has bravely carried himself in all the combats delivered by his regi-

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ment, especially in Champagne in 1915 and in the Somme in 1916. Again has given proof, during the recent operations, of a fine fearlessness under fire and of remarkable devotion. Already wounded and twice cited.'

Frank E. Whitmore was the first American citizen to fall fighting in the ranks of the Foreign Legion after the declaration of war against Germany by the United States. Christopher Charles wrote of him:

'Whitmore was one of the gamest fighters that ever crossed over from the States. He was one of my oldest friends at the front. We came from America on the same boat, enlisted together in Paris, were sent to the same barracks, went through training together and together we shared all hardships. I can truthfully say that Whitmore never knew what fear was. That is why he sleeps peacefully to-day in a little grave with the colonel of the Legion. If he had not been the man he was, he would have been in a hospital instead of in the grave.'

Monsieur Othon Guerlac, a former professor at Cornell University, who was attached to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris during the war, after he was wounded at the front, said in part in an article contributed to a Paris newspaper about Whitmore:

'The grand public already knows some names of young Americans who did not wait until their country was in war to come give their blood for the cause of France which they identified with that of Humanity. Pierre Mille and other writers have woven funeral crowns for these chevaliers of the ideal, these noble hearts that the country of dollars has sent us. But Alan Seeger, Chapman, Rockwell, were artists, poets, aristocrats, men representative of that which is most generous and most fine in the American race and in all other races.

'I know another one more modest, of whose death I have just learned. He succumbed in the ranks of the Foreign Legion during the last offensive, where his regiment covered itself with

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glory in conquering a front of six to seven kilometres, between the heights of Moronvilliers and Auberive.

‘His name was Frank Whitmore. He was neither a lettered man, nor an artist, nor an aristocrat. He was a man of the common people, one of those very ordinary men of whom Lincoln said one day that the Creator must love them greatly, since he had made so many of them.

‘Frank Whitmore came to France, where he did not know a living soul, at the very beginning of the war, to enlist in the Legion. I made his acquaintance only three months ago, at a *dépôt* where he was under treatment. At once he interested me as a curious psychological and moral case. Why had this American farmer come to our country to “get his face smashed”?

‘Although a resident of Virginia, Whitmore was not a Southerner. In that case, the warmth of the blood might have explained many things. No, he was a true Yankee, born north of Boston. He was visibly the son of farmers — a product of that soil at the same time harsh and fertile which has given the sober, ingenuous, and severe race of American peasants. He had, of the Yankee farmer, the reticence, the phlegm, the great capacity for being bored, a certain artlessness and the long silences. Having formerly commenced French in a village school, he continued to study it with a stubborn patience. He read it well and spoke it badly. But he was not discouraged.

‘He was a simple soul, with healthy and pure joys. He did not smoke, and his sole stimulant was coffee. He was amused by little things, and found an unmixed joy in listening to the jokes of the wags in his room. Even-tempered, always placid and smiling, this grown-up boy of an unalterable serenity was astonishing in a circle where to grumble became a second nature.

‘Whitmore never grumbled. Everything interested him. He observed, studied, learned. One day, he confided to me that there were fortunes to be made in France in scientific raising of chickens according to American methods. Of his own career he

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never spoke unless questioned. He had received a citation for bravery before the enemy. He never boasted of it. He only boasted that he had been the only one of his formation who had been able to sleep by the cannons, in the midst of a frightful uproar, the eve of the attack in the Somme. He had not only an ingenuous soul; he evidently also had a good conscience.

‘He was evidently a chap who had the sentiment of duty, like one has sometimes among those descendants of the Puritans who have not yet learned to be sceptical. He came here to fight for our cause because our cause had touched his conscience and his heart. And he fought until the end.

‘One day I recall having asked him what had decided him, a simple farmer who only knew France by what he had heard said of it and what he had read, to come thus and enlist under its flag.

‘He replied: “They were talking a lot around me of enlisting to fight for France. They talked. For myself, I decided on something other than words.” And he came. Decidedly, words were not enough for this Yankee. He had to have actions.’

Frank Whitmore was born near Ellsworth, Maine, on May 21, 1876, the son of Charles Whitmore, a farmer. He went to Virginia as a young man, and worked for years on the Old Dominion Line boats. With money he had saved, he bought a farm on the James River, near Richmond, and was a successful poultry farmer until the war called him to France and death.

3

John Barret, a young graduate of Dublin University, came to France in August, 1914, and enlisted in the Foreign Legion for the duration of the war. He first trained at Toulouse, then by an error he was sent to Morocco with a group of German and Austrian volunteers. He had many unusual and exciting experiences there, and obtained a rare insight into the mentality

of some of the Germans who had enrolled under the banner of France. In a letter written some time after he came to the French front, Barret gave a splendid picture of the Foreign Legion in Morocco during the World War.

‘I disembarked at Casablanca (Morocco) on the 26th September, 1914, after a most exciting voyage of five days,’ the Irish fighter wrote. ‘The detachment trudged through the dust-laden streets of the old Arab city until we came to the tents that were pitched to receive us. My first impression on arriving at the camp was a very bad one, as we were forbidden to go into the town owing to the fact that the Germans in Casablanca had poisoned the flour and the military authorities feared for the consequences. At this time also the military in Casablanca raided the premises of a big German merchant and found a huge stock of sardine boxes, each containing a charge of five cartridges for the modern Mauser rifle. We remained four days almost in a state of imprisonment at Casablanca, and each day we had news of a new *coup* on the part of the Kaiser’s spies.

‘After four days at Casablanca, we embarked on the little narrow-gauge railway for Meknès. We enjoyed the journey very much, travelling in little open wagons, and arrived at our destination after the three most pleasant days we spent in the land of the Moors.

‘On disembarking at Meknès, we got our first sample of the old Legion, as we were met at the station by fifty grizzly-faced veteran N.C.O.’s of the famous Foreign Legion. These men were specially chosen amongst the non-coms of the two regiments of the Legion in Morocco, their special qualities being energy and a knowledge of the German language, as almost the whole detachment was composed of Germans and Austrians. We were conducted to our tents in the camp of Meknès, where we were divided into squads and got our first *rata* from the kitchen of the Foreign Legion.

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‘After the *soupe*, we were allowed to visit the city, but we had to go armed and in groups, as a revolt was expected to break out at any moment — the flames being fanned by the German agents everywhere. As a precaution, the military authorities had the cannons trained on the mosques, as the Arabs are very fanatic and dread nothing like the desecration or destruction of their places of worship. At this time half-a-million pounds of ammunition were found buried in the caves at Meknès pending the Arab revolt.

‘After a few days rest in the “most Arab” of all the Moroccan cities, the “pantomime” began — I say “pantomime” because it was a most laughable performance — the “Instruction Company.” There were many Germans who spoke French, but there were also many who did not, and consequently the instruction was principally in German. Oh, ye Gods! If the Kaiser could only see the “brave” Huns being instructed by *German* N.C.O.’s in the Legion, and in the German tongue — with the German prisoners of war (from the Marne) making roads near by, to serve as a background!

‘We were three Englishmen, and I may tell you that we were hated like poison by those hardy volunteers who preferred to go to Morocco to fight for France (whilst waiting for the speedy German victory which none of them doubted for an instant) rather than pine away in a concentration camp. The German bravos who instructed us hated us none the less and their best effort at politeness was “*sale Anglais!*” Here is how my squad was composed: corporal, an Austrian (and fanatic Boche); two German ex-waiters who worked in Ireland once in the refreshment rooms of the G. S. & W. Railway; one Prussian from Berlin; one Bavarian; two German Alsatians; two pure-blooded German Austrians, and one Turk. Every solitary man of these hoped for the victory of the German armies and openly voiced their opinions, particularly when they were a little drunk, which happened rather often. In this bedlam, fights with the bayonet

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were the order of the day, as the French and Allies differed in opinion with the sons of the Kaiser.

'One day in the month of December, '14, I asked a German prisoner of war, who was captured at the Marne, what he thought of the war, and he replied meekly that he hoped from day to day to see the victorious German Army disembark in Morocco. All the prisoners were of opinion that the Imperial Army was invincible, and at that time many Germans in the Legion deserted to the Moroccan Army, where they were of invaluable service to the Moors — a fact which was proved soon after (the end of December, '14) when an entire French flying column was surrounded and annihilated at six kilometres from the post of Khénifra. This column consisted of thirteen hundred men, horse, foot, and artillery (as well as machine guns). They were buried six days later by the Legion and the Senegalese who went to the place by forced marches. Every man without exception (officers and all) was stripped naked and half-butchered. The sight was an appalling one. Some time afterwards, the body (naked still) of the colonel who commanded the *colonne* was returned in exchange for four Arab women who were taken prisoners by us. This *coup* by the Arabs was commanded by a German officer, seconded by deserters from the Legion. I remember well how sick I felt when I saw that the men I was compelled to call comrades were delighted at the French disaster, although they themselves wore (or rather disgraced) the French uniform.

'Our instruction was finished on the 15th December, 1914, and we were sent to active companies in the Sixth Battalion which was composed entirely of old Legionnaires, mostly Germans and Austrians also, as the French had almost all been sent to France.

'The political feeling was very high at this time and fights were regularly on the day's *menu*. I remarked that the Germans and Austrians in the old Legion hated their compatriots

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because they engaged for the war in the Legion instead of returning to Germany and Austria to fight for the Fatherland. However, the English came in for special treatment at the hands of those patriotic Huns!

‘I never in all my life heard the English dissected as they were by the Germans. They called the *Engländer*s every filthy name from sea to sun, but their principal epithet was “the despicable little army of shop-keepers.” For my part, I did not pay much attention, as I never liked to kick a dog in a manger.

‘We had an American named Daly (from Texas) at this time with us. He hailed fresh from the Mexican Revolution, where he was a cavalry lieutenant with General Villa. He dressed a few Huns in fine shape *à l’Américaine*, but unfortunately he went to the mounted company, where he hoped to become at least a N.C.O., as he had a letter of recommendation from the colonel commanding the subdivision.

‘A fact that I could never properly understand was the undying hatred and jealousy that existed between the old Legionnaires and the volunteers for the war — this feeling was even more bitter on the part of the officers and the non-coms.

‘To give a sample of how far this animosity was carried — the volunteers were forbidden to follow the *Peloton des Élèves Caporaux* (Corporals’ School), thus depriving them of all chance to become corporals or sergeants; however, I must say, in all justice to the military authorities, that an exception was made in my case. As a matter of fact, I got first place in my exam. — a fact which surprised me very much, as I was up against men who had from ten to fifteen years’ service. When I was admitted to the Corporals’ School, the Germans in my company were furious and swore that they would desert or pass *Conseil de Guerre* sooner than be commanded by a *sale Anglais*! I may remark that my captain (Breville) was an Alsatian who once served as first lieutenant in the German Imperial Guard.

‘On the 1st January, 1915, we left Meknès for a campaign

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against the Arabs, who had attacked our outposts all along the line. We went by forced marches, up to our knees in mud and slush (this mud is the same sand that burns the feet in summer time), and on arriving at the last outpost, we entrenched ourselves as usual and placed the customary wire entanglements around our camp.

‘During this famous march from Meknès to Khénifra, I saw for the first time with my open eyes that the Foreign Legion was a veritable Legion of veterans. The “Volunteers,” although almost all fine young fellows physically, could not hold a candle for the old veterans, and in the hardest hours of the march, the old Legionnaires never missed an opportunity of slinging mud at their new comrades, especially when one of the volunteers fell out. On arriving at the first *étape*, the captains of the different companies wrote a report regarding the conduct of the volunteers during the march — and this *rapport* was *not* a felicitation for us. On the whole, the new Legionnaires did not do badly, but, as I have already said, they were not capable of sustaining the glorious aureole of the Legion. The *esprit de corps* of the Foreign Legion is the great factor which helps to keep it the iron regiment that it is. Every Legionnaire in the old Legion is firmly convinced that the Legion is the greatest regiment that exists on earth.

‘On the 5th January, ’15, we left camp at 2 A.M. to attack the Moroccans that had advanced against our outposts of M’searth and Khénifra. We stole a march on them very cleverly by bandaging the wheels of our cannon carriages and other vehicles.

‘At 5 A.M., as the sun rose and the dying fires of the two bivouacs shed their last lustre, the two armies faced one another. It was a peculiar sight — the Moors, dressed in their long white cloaks and mounted on their fast Arab horses, drawn up in serried ranks on the crest of a hill at eight hundred yards from our columns.

‘The French Army presented a most picturesque sight, as it

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contained almost all the colors of the rainbow. There were the different regiments of Arab cavalry — Spahis, Tabors, *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, the Legion, the "*Bat. d'Af.*" or *Infanterie Légère d'Afrique*, Senegalese, Colonial Infantry, *Tirailleurs*, Zouaves, Colonial Artillery — all in their multi-colored regalia.

'In this fight I had my "baptism of fire" — a rather nerve-racking experience, particularly as the Moors continued to advance in spite of our artillery and machine-gun fire, but the combat was finished by a brilliant cavalry charge of the Algerian Spahis. It was a drawn fight, like the ones that followed, as we were too weak numerically to take the strong positions occupied by the Moroccans.

'The most striking feature in this campaign was the Germans in the Legion marching against the enemies of France, singing "The Watch on the Rhine"! I must say that the Germans fought like lions, but a paradox that beat my powers of comprehension was this — they (the Germans) always sang the praises of the Legion whilst on campaign, and when back for a little rest, drank and sang to the honor and glory of the German Army!

'The great *fort* in the Moroccan system of fighting is their *coups de main* or raids by night. They crawl quite naked, and greased all over the body, right into the French camps, although they have to pass a thick chain of sentries. When they get to the little tents, they steal right inside and with a well-sharpened knife cut the straps of the rifles (as the rifles are *always* strapped onto the wrists of the soldiers) and steal away again. In the event of a soldier awakening, they just cut his throat and make the best fist they can of the affair. They are very seldom captured under these circumstances.

'Here is an example: My best comrade, Corporal Ben Dickson (an Englishman), was asleep in his little tent with five of his men at Iat-Lias, when a Moroccan stole in and cut the straps of two rifles; just as he was getting away, my friend Ben

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Dickson awoke, and as he felt immediately for his rifle, found that it was gone. He dashed after the Moroccan with the bayonet in his hand; just at this moment, the sentry fired on the marauder and missed, but in his haste, the Arab dropped one rifle, but not that of Ben Dickson. My friend the corporal was court-martialled, but got only thirty days' prison (which he never served) on account of his plucky conduct. He (B. D.) was sent to the Third Battalion, where he arrived (at Fez) one Saturday evening. On the following day (Sunday), he was placing the sentries near the position occupied by the company when another Arab stole up on a rifle-stealing raid. Ben Dickson spotted the thief, but the wily Moroccan got his blow in first and killed my best friend in Morocco and one of the most intelligent and energetic corporals in the Foreign Legion.

'Once we were out for a campaign, and on returning at night after a pretty good set-to with the Arabs, we were followed by some of their most daring scouts. At eight o'clock, when the officers were going to dine, an Arab stole right up to a lieutenant of the Algerian Spahis, at five or six paces from a sentry, and killed the officer dead and got right away. I was almost twenty paces from the scene, but just heard the officer's first and last cry.

'When the Moroccans take our men prisoners, they strip and torture them. There are still many French officers in their hands. Some have their eyes gouged out, and others are forced to make ammunition and instruct the Arabs in the use of the machine guns and cannons; but I am certain that those officers deceive them by every possible means, as they never succeed in manipulating the guns they happen to capture.¹

'I passed corporal in August, 1915, and got the Colonial Medal the same month. In September, 1915, I was ordered

¹ Corporal Barret's account of the fighting in Morocco might well be a description of the warfare still going on between the French and the Moorish tribes in the unpacified regions of that country, where conditions are very much as they were in 1914-18.

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back to France. On my return journey to Casablanca to take the boat, I spent an evening and night at a small town called Kenitra, where I met and spoke with some German prisoners of war, among whom was an individual that interested me very much. This German had already served fifteen years in the Foreign Legion, and at the outbreak of the present war was quietly enjoying his pension from the Legion at Aix-la-Chapelle. As a German reservist, he was forced to march with his old German regiment, but at the battle of the Marne was taken prisoner and afterwards sent to Morocco with others of his countrymen. This German told me that he commanded a section of the Legion (as sergeant) at the taking of the same town of Kenitra where he now finds himself safely installed as a German prisoner of war. He was certainly an authority on the military conquest of Morocco, and appeared to know the names of all the French officers of any note who took part in the different expeditions in Eastern and Western Morocco. Notwithstanding his fifteen years with the Legion and his pension from the French Government, he remained German at heart and did not appear to regret his fate and his pension.

‘On arriving at Casablanca, I was informed that I should wait ten days for a boat for Bordeaux. This delay permitted me to witness the most peculiar coincidence that I have ever known or heard of.

‘One morning, the sergeant of the day entered our room at the *Dépôt des Isolés* and commanded me to take part in a military funeral, as the deceased soldier was a Legionnaire.

‘On arriving at the hospital with the four men that formed the detachment, I entered the little room where the corpse was laid out, to pay my last respects to a departed comrade, which consisted of a military salute. Instead of one corpse, I found two, and, to satisfy my curiosity, I began to read the inscriptions on the coffins. Imagine my surprise on finding that both the deceased men were Germans and (appalling coincidence)

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both had the same surname and were from the same little Prussian town. One was dressed in the German campaign uniform (a prisoner of war who died of pneumonia) and the other in the uniform of the Foreign Legion.

'The Legionnaire was born a Prussian, naturalized French, and had finished his fifteen years' service in the Legion when the war broke out, but was forced to serve during the war as a naturalized Frenchman.

'They were both buried in the same grave on the sandy beach of Casablanca, with a broiling African sun to dissipate the last vestige of that heritage of hate which the fortunes of war prevented them from transmitting to posterity.'

4

The One Hundred and Seventieth Line Infantry Regiment fought just to the left of the Foreign Legion during the April, 1917, Aisne-Champagne offensive. On the morning of the 16th it charged the German works in the Bois du Seigneur. Six hundred Bavarians, all the survivors of two full regiments who were holding the position when the French preliminary bombardment started, surrendered without a struggle to the first wave of assault, five hundred Frenchmen strong. The prisoners had hardly been sent toward the rear and work started to repair the battered trenches, before a Prussian Guard regiment commenced a violent counter-attack.

Sergeant Eugene Jacob was commanding a section of engineers, recently formed to follow up the first wave of attack and to repair roads and destroyed bridges and to widen the breaches in the German barbed-wire entanglements so that reënforcements could advance rapidly. When the Prussian Guardsmen rushed forward, he ordered his men to throw down their picks, shovels, and other implements of toil and to take up their rifles and grenades; the engineers then took their place in the first

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line of defense of the conquered position, and after a desperate fight the ground was maintained.

The One Hundred and Seventieth consolidated and held all the terrain it had taken, in spite of all the enemy efforts to recapture it. During the fighting, Corporal Frank Dupont was badly injured and taken away to the hospital incapacitated for further fighting. Eugene Jacob conducted himself with such cool courage on all occasions that he was again cited in Army Orders. Lieutenant Robert Mulhauser was promoted to a place on the staff of the colonel commanding the regiment, and Sergeant Ferdinand Capdevielle was promoted aspirant-officer. His colonel named him as one of the three best under-officers in the entire regiment, and granted him three weeks' leave of absence to visit his family in New York.

The main French offensive operations in the Aisne-Champagne region came to an end on April 20, because of the interference of panic-stricken French politicians. The plans of General Nivelle had been hampered from the very start by lack of confidence on the part of certain members of the Government in Paris. Exaggerated tales of French losses were put into circulation throughout France by traitors and a small group of politicians apparently anxious to see Germany win the war. General Nivelle was virtually disgraced, and France's great military genius, General Mangin, was sacrificed to the *dé-faitist* element in Paris and the command of an army was taken away from him.

As a matter of fact, the offensive had started off well. A great amount of terrain was gained, and by April 20, Nivelle's forces had captured twenty-one thousand German prisoners, along with one hundred and eighty-three cannon, hundreds of mitrailleuses, and heaps of ammunition and supplies. The French losses were much less than in previous offensive actions: fifteen thousand killed, twenty thousand five hundred missing, and sixty thousand wounded. The politicians in Paris claimed

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to Marshal Haig, who insisted that the offensive continue, that the losses were more than double that number. A wave of pessimism and despair swept over the civilian population of France, and eventually reached the army at the front.

The newly invented French 'tanks' were first tried out on April 16, but the results were not what had been hoped for from them. Heavily loaded with extra gasoline, in order to cover the great distance between their starting-point and the German third-line defenses they were to attack, they moved very slowly and were destroyed by the enemy artillery. Many were set on fire by shells, and their heroic crews roasted alive. The infantry was untrained to work with the 'tanks,' and co-operation between the two arms was bad.

Wild stories concerning the failure of the 'tanks' were told in the interior of France, and added to the general depression. Many civilians had honestly expected the new war engines rapidly to drive the invaders back across the Rhine. The word that the 'machine to end the war' had not yet been invented came as a bitter disappointment.

Chapter XIV

THE LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE IN THE SOMME

THERE was considerable aerial activity in the Somme throughout the winter of 1916-17, despite unfavorable weather conditions, and the pilots of the *Escadrille Américaine* were constantly on the wing. They shared an aviation field, which was a veritable sea of mud, with eight other celebrated French *escadrilles de chasse*, and lived a cold and uncomfortable life in a portable wooden barrack, through the wide cracks of which a glacial wind swept night and day. The nearest town, Cachy, was fifteen kilometres away, and it was next to impossible to obtain anything other than the bare necessities of life. The pilots slept in their fur-lined flying combinations, and their lion-cub mascot cuddled up to them for warmth.

Because of the importance of their aviation field, it was frequently bombed at night by German machines. Paul Pavelka and Lieutenant de Laage de Meux, the second in command of the *Escadrille*, volunteered to do night flying and attack the raiders. On one of the night flights Pavelka had a most unusual and dangerous experience, of which he wrote:

'The Germans came over the other night and raided our camp. They dropped eight bombs in all, and set fire to one of the hangars of Captain Guynemer's *escadrille*, Nieuport 3, which is located next to us. The hangar blazed up in a hurry and one mechanic was burned to death. He was pinned under an aeroplane, knocked over by the bombs' explosion. When we

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got him out, in his charred hand was found a knife with which he had tried to cut himself free.

'In the midst of all the excitement I flew up in my new eighty horse-power, fifteen-metre Nieuport, in hopes of meeting some of the Germans and adding another to my list. After leaving the ground my lights failed to work. It was no moment to turn back, so I continued without lights. Not being able to signal the ground, I was subjected to a most intense fire from our guns.

'I kept on mounting, but did not see anything of the invaders. Strange to tell, I knew where I was all the time until I flew over Amiens. Then, suddenly, all the lights below went out, and from then on I did not know where I was.

'To come down certainly would have resulted disastrously for me. Every time I neared the earth, the machine guns on the ground would start in working on me. The gunners could not see me, but were shooting in the direction of the sound of my motors, with tracer bullets. Some came very close, I assure you.

'I flew around and around, not wishing to get too far away from my base. At daylight, having completely exhausted my fuel, I landed at Martainville, about forty kilometres from the home camp. Bad weather forced me to remain there some days. I put up at a château occupied by British officers and was royally welcomed and finely treated. When it cleared up, I flew back here.'

Pavelka learned later that he had been signalled all about Amiens as a hostile aeroplane and had created much excitement among the inhabitants. Amiens had been bombarded several times by the German aviators, and many women and children were killed. On one occasion a bomb fell through the roof of a military hospital. It crashed through a bed occupied by a wounded soldier, and struck exactly where the man's leg would have been had it not been amputated by the surgeon the morn-

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ing before. The bomb then stuck in the floor and did not explode.

Juan Roxas, of Manila, the sole Filipino volunteer flying for France at the front, was killed in aerial combat in December. His *escadrille* was one of those that shared the Cachy field with the Americans, and Pavelka and others who had gone to flying school at Pau with him saw him start off on his last flight. He attacked a Fokker high over the lines, and a French pilot saw his Nieuport fall in flames behind the German trenches.

Roxas belonged to one of the most distinguished of the great land-owning families in the Philippine Islands. He was a student at the Beaux-Arts in Paris when war was declared, and at once entered the service of France. He became a skillful pilot, and was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre* with several citations.

Jim McConnell fell ill with rheumatism in his injured back, and was forced to enter the hospital. Bert Hall left the *Escadrille Américaine* and eventually was sent to Russia. After the revolution there, he went to the United States and never returned to Europe during the war.

Volunteer aviators were asked to go to the Saloniki front, and Pavelka responded to the call. He had been lonely since the death of his old *camarade de combat*, Kiffin Rockwell, and felt that a change of scene might improve his spirits.

The German Ambassador at Washington, Count Bernstorff, protested to the State Department there against the presence on the Western Front of a group of aviators known as the *Escadrille Américaine*, and the American Government obediently sent a note to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To avoid international complications the name of the American unit was first changed to the *Escadrille des Volontaires*. Then, upon the suggestion of the French Embassy at Washington, it was called the *Escadrille Lafayette*. The American flyers liked the new name, and worked all the harder to make it famous and thereby render the German Ambassador ridiculous.

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When the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line began in March, 1917, the French Aviation was kept more busy than ever, and the American pilots took an active part in observing and hindering the enemy. McConnell slipped away from the hospital and returned to the front, although his back was still so stiff that his comrades had to help him dress.

He was killed on the morning of March 19, in an aerial combat over Flavy-le-Martel, near Ham. Little Genêt, who was with McConnell on his last flight, told of it:

‘Mac and I kept on and at ten o’clock were circling around the region of Ham, watching out for the heavier machines doing reconnoitring work below us. We went higher than a thousand metres during that time. About ten, for some reason or other of his own, Mac suddenly headed into the German lines toward Saint-Quentin and I naturally followed close to his rear and above him. Perhaps he wanted to make observations around Saint-Quentin. At any rate, we had got north of Ham and quite inside the hostile lines, when I saw two Boche machines crossing toward us from the region of Saint-Quentin at an altitude quite higher than ours. We were then about sixteen hundred metres. I supposed Mac saw them the same as I did. One Boche was much farther ahead than the other, and was headed as if he would dive at any moment on Mac. I glanced ahead at Mac and saw what direction he was taking, and then pulled back to climb up as quickly as possible to gain an advantageous height over the nearest Boche. It was cloudy and misty and I had to keep my eyes on him all the time, so naturally I couldn’t watch Mac. The second Boche was still much farther off than his mate. By this time I had got to twenty-two hundred; the Boche was almost up to me and taking a diagonal course right in front. He started to circle, and his gunner — it was a biplane, probably an Albatross, although the mist was too thick and dark for me to see much but the bare outline of his dirty, dark-green body, with white and

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black crosses — opened fire before I did, and his first volley did some damage. One bullet cut the left central support of my upper wing in half, an explosive bullet cut in half the left guiding rod of the left aileron, and I was momentarily stunned by part of it which dug a nasty gouge into my left cheek. I had already opened fire and was driving straight for the Boche with teeth set and my hand gripping the triggers making a veritable stream of fire spitting out of my gun at him, as I had incendiary bullets, it being my job lately to chase after observation balloons, and on Saturday morning I had also been up after the reported Zeppelins. I had to keep turning around the Boche every second, and he was circling around toward me and I was on the inside of the circle, so his gunner had all the advantage over me. I thought I had him on fire for one instant as I saw — or supposed I did — flames on his fuselage. Everything passed in a few seconds and we swung past each other in opposite directions at scarcely twenty-five metres from each other — the Boche beating off toward the north and I immediately dived down in the opposite direction, wondering every second whether the broken wing support would hold together or not and feeling weak and stunned from the hole in my face. A battery opened a heavy fire on me as I went down, the shells breaking just behind me. I straightened out over Ham at a thousand metres, and began to circle around to look for Mac or the other Boche, but saw absolutely nothing the entire fifteen minutes I stayed there. I was fearful every minute that my whole top wing would come off, and I thought that possibly Mac had got around toward the west over our lines, missed me, and was already on his way back to camp. So I finally turned back for our camp, having to fly very low and against a strong northern wind, on account of low clouds just forming. I got back at a quarter to eleven and my first question to my mechanic was: "Has McConnell returned?"

"He hasn't, Paul, and no news of any sort have we had of

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him yet, although we hoped and prayed every hour yesterday for some word to come in.... There's no use in losing hope yet. If a prisoner, Mac may even be able to escape and return to our lines, on account of the very unsettled state of the retreating Germans.'"

Some days later a French cavalry patrol found McConnell's body lying beside his badly smashed aeroplane.

A peasant woman who saw McConnell's last fight afterwards related that he engaged battle with a German aeroplane, and while he was thus busy a second enemy machine dived upon him from behind. He was shot through the body by several bullets, any one of which would have proved fatal.

McConnell ended a letter, written in case of death:

'My burial is of no import. Make it as easy as possible for yourselves. I have no religion and do not care for any service. If the omission would embarrass you, I presume I could stand the performance.

'Good luck to the rest of you. God damn Germany and *vive la France!*

'(Signed) J. R. McCONNELL'

McConnell had already been decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*, and a second and posthumous citation read:

An American citizen engaged in the service of France. A pilot as modest as he was courageous, saying often to his comrades: 'So much the better if I must be killed, since it is for France.' He found a glorious death March 19, 1917, in the course of a combat against enemy aeroplanes.

Genêt was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*, and cited in the Order of the Army:

An American citizen engaged in the service of France. Has given proof of the very finest qualities of ardor and devotion, delivering aerial combats since his first arrival at the *Escadrille*, carrying out re-

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connaissances at a low altitude, and dispensing his energies unsparingly.

March 19, 1917, he was wounded during a combat with two enemy aeroplanes and refused to interrupt his service.

James Roger McConnell was the last American citizen killed fighting the Germans in French uniform before the entry into the World War of the United States; Edmond Charles Clinton Genêt was the first American citizen to fall after the United States declared war against Germany.

Genêt was slain by German anti-aircraft batteries on the afternoon of April 16. He had been feeling ill for some time, but insisted on going out on patrol with Raoul Lufbery, although one of the other pilots offered to take his place. On account of the clouds the two aviators flew low. Over the enemy lines they encountered a heavy fire from the cannon on the ground, and suddenly Lufbery saw his companion make a half-turn, as if he were returning home.

Lufbery tried to follow Genêt, but lost him in the clouds. He was greatly surprised when he returned to the aviation field to find that Genêt had not arrived. A few minutes later the news came by telephone that Genêt had fallen five kilometres within the French lines. Wounded by a shell fragment, he had struggled valiantly to get home, but had evidently lost consciousness in the air. The aeroplane had crashed into the middle of a road with the motor at full speed, and was one of the most complete wrecks ever seen.

Genêt, the 'Benjamin of the *Escadrille Lafayette*,' as Captain Thénault called him, was buried with fitting honors in the military cemetery at Ham, in the midst of a driving snowstorm. At the moment Captain Thénault, who had read the office, said 'Amen,' the sun pierced the clouds for an instant and illuminated the bier, 'like a benediction from Heaven,' as one of the pilots said later.

Genêt had been made happy by the entry into the war of his

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native land, on the Allied side, as he had suffered keenly because the United States so long remained neutral. When Mr. Wilson was reëlected President on a 'He kept us out of war' platform, Genêt wrote home:

'Where has all the old genuine honor and patriotism and human feeling of our countrymen gone? What are those people, who live on their farms in the West, safe from the chances of foreign invasion, made of, anyway? They decided the election of Mr. Wilson. Don't they know anything about the invasion of Belgium, the submarine warfare against their own countrymen, and all the other outrages which all neutral countries, headed by the United States, long ago should have risen up and suppressed, and which, because of the past Administration's "Peace at any Price" attitude, have been left to increase and increase? They crave for peace, those unthinking, uncaring voters, and what's the reason? Why, they are making money hand over fist because their country is at peace — at peace at the price of its honor and respect in the whole civilized world; at peace while France and Belgium are being soaked in blood by a barbarous invasion; while the very citizens of the United States are being murdered and these same invaders are laughing behind our backs — even in our very faces. It couldn't be possible for Americans in America to feel the same bitter way as Americans over here among the very scenes of this war's horrors. It is not comprehensible over there that tragedy reigns supreme. Come over here and you will be engulfed like the rest of us in the realization of the necessity of the whole civilized world arming itself against this intrusion of utter brutality and militaristic arrogance. Peace — God forbid such happiness until the invaders have been driven back behind their own borders, knowing the lessons of their folly in treading ruthlessly on unoffending neutral territory and all the rest of their deeds of piracy, and the blood of France and Belgium has dried up.'

Genêt was cited posthumously:

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A devoted and courageous pilot, who found a glorious death on April 16, 1917. He terminated the enumeration of his last wishes with the words: '*Vive la France toujours.*'

The *Escadrille Lafayette* moved its camp to Ham, where it was nearer to the new battle-front fixed by the German retreat. Its ranks had been grievously thinned, but there were new men learning to fly at the schools. Lawrence Scanlan had been invalided out of the Foreign Legion on January 1, 1917, with one leg six inches shorter than the other, after more than a year and a half in the hospital. He came directly to Paris; a week later he enlisted in the Aviation, and started in training as a pilot at Camp d'Avord. Louis Charton, also just out of the hospital, followed him on February 20, and Charles Trinkard was withdrawn from the trenches on March 13 and sent to Avord to learn to fly. Bouligny was transferred to the Aviation Corps on May 15, after his wounded leg healed. He had put in numerous applications to become an aviator, but his officers had been loath to let him leave the Legion, where he was a valuable and reliable *sous-officer*.

Chapter XV

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR!

THE American volunteers fighting in the French Army welcomed the entry of their native land into the war on the Allied side, but they were too busy at the front to celebrate the news properly when it first reached them. Sergeant Jacob voiced the sentiment of all his comrades when he wrote:

‘At last a good thing has been done by our country. Our President has shown the Boches that he can fight with real weapons as well as with notes. I see in the French newspapers that Mr. Wilson is calling for American volunteers for the United States Army. If possible I wish to be attached to the Expeditionary Army sent to France, but I would not like to be sent to a training camp as an instructor. I wish to fight the Germans to the last — until they are licked, as they deserve.’

The United States Military Attachés in Paris received numerous letters from the Americans who had been fighting for France. Joseph Lydon wrote from the hospital where he had been for a year and a half, offering to serve as an automobilist with the American Army when it came to France, and John Cordonnier wrote from the front, volunteering to transfer to the first American regiment to arrive in France.

The little group of Americans still left in the Foreign Legion wrote directly to President Wilson and offered their services to the American Army which they expected would soon be in France. Their letter read:

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To the President of the United States of America:

Sir: We, the undersigned, American citizens serving with the Foreign Legion, beg to request most earnestly your intervention in order that we may obtain our liberation from said regiment to enter our own service. We beg to point out that whatever our individual records as soldiers may be, the Americans have enjoyed a reputation in the Legion for more than ordinary valor. Many have been wounded, many killed, including some quite recently. We beg to point out that the other Allied Powers, notably Belgium, England, Russia, Italy, and Portugal, have had their citizens or subjects liberated from this corps and transferred to their own armies. We think we merit the same consideration, and we confidently count on your prompt and immediate action to obtain the desired result. To delay means that we will be sent in all probability into future attacks with the loss of many lives of great value to our own forces when they will have arrived here. The experience and training that we have received in this regiment will undoubtedly render most of us of great and inestimable service to our own countrymen still unused to modern warfare. Since our country has taken part under your wise leadership in the great struggle for liberty and humanity we, who are, so to speak, the advanced guard of the American forces, respectfully bring your attention to the need of immediate action toward our liberation, and we claim our right as American citizens to fight under our own flag. Therefore, we rely on your own patriotic spirit to see that we obtain this right without delay.

With the expression of our respect and confidence, we are, sir,
Your obedient servants.

An answer to these offers finally came back from Washington, as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT, A.G.O.

June 29, 1917

*To Captain Carl Boyd, Third Cavalry Military Attaché
American Embassy, Paris*

The subject of utilization of the services of Americans serving abroad has received the careful consideration of the War Department

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in a number of instances, and the conclusion has been reached that it is not deemed for the best interest of the United States for the War Department to request the discharge of Americans serving in the Allied Armies except in special cases where it is clearly advantageous to do so.

The cases in question are not believed to be of such a character as to warrant the War Department in making such a request.

By order of the Secretary of War.

(Signed)

J. T. DEAN

Adjutant General

The American volunteers were intensely disappointed with the fashion in which their offer to serve their own country was received by the United States Government. They took the matter up with various Army and State officials, and some of them came to Paris on leave and spoke with members of the American Military Mission and to various persons at the American Embassy, without, however, getting any satisfaction either by word or by writing. Algernon Sartoris criticized as follows the action of the War Department:

‘It is a disgrace to our Government that these men have been so far overlooked by the United States Army in its search for experienced men to train and lead the new Army. All the other Allies — Russia, England, Italy, Belgium, and Portugal — were quick to perceive the advantage they would have in permitting their citizens of wide experience at the front to come to their own armies and to impart to their comrades at first hand all that they had learned in the Legion — a perfect harvest. The United States alone has not only not profited by this opportunity, but would seem even to regard these splendid specimens of their valiant manhood as a band of adventurers with little or nothing to recommend them. In the mean time they plod on, and a golden opportunity is lost.’

Lieutenant Charles Sweeny was able to get leave from the French Government to return to America, and, after consider-

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able struggle with red tape and jealousy at Washington, enlisted in the United States Army, and was given the rank of major. Sweeny had spent many months in the hospital from his wound, which was complicated by abscesses occasioned by bits of cloth carried into his chest and lung by the bullet. He then had spent some time drilling recruits at La Valbonne, and at the officers' training school at Montélimar, after which he trained for some months with the new 'tanks' corps.

In the United States Army, Sweeny trained soldiers at Fort Myer, Virginia, in modern methods of warfare, and was finally sent back to France with the American Expeditionary Forces. He was promoted lieutenant-colonel about the time of the Armistice.

Alvan F. Sanborn volunteered as interpreter as soon as the first United States troops arrived in France; in September, 1917, he was named member of the Inter-Allied Commission for the professional reëducation of war cripples as representative of the Department of the Interior, and held that post until 1923.

2

The Foreign Legion spent some time in the region of Cuperly after its exploits around Auberive; the Legionnaires reposed themselves from the strain and 'fatigue of battle, while the battalions were re-formed and brought up to full strength with new officers and men from the *dépôt*. Battalion-Chief Deville turned over the command of the regiment to Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, an energetic officer with many years' experience leading the Legion in the Colonies.

The morale of the Legionnaires was entirely unaffected by the crisis of pessimism which crept up toward the front from the civilian population far away from the field of battle. A few French regiments were touched by the 'peace at any price' propaganda put in circulation by spies and traitors, became

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discouraged, and refused to obey their officers; some units attempted to disband and return home. In the Aisne sector a mutiny was started, and officers were hissed or even fired upon by their own men. Severe repressive measures were taken, and a number of ringleaders in the mutiny were court-martialled and shot.

Throughout all the period of unrest the Legion remained calm and faithful, setting to the regiments around it a wonderful example of fidelity. On June 20, 1917, it was sent into the trenches at Berry-au-Bac to replace a French regiment which was getting restless and on the verge of mutiny. The French High Command knew that the Foreign Legion was one of the units in whose loyalty full confidence could be placed.

The Berry-au-Bac trenches were in a salient dominated by the white craters and desolated terrain of Hill 108 of bloody memory, and were just a little way to the right of the sector held by the *Deuxième Étranger* during the first winter of the war. The Germans hemmed the Legionnaires in on three sides, and kept up a ceaseless activity. Christopher Charles wrote of how the Legion was welcomed back into the trenches:

‘We are in a line of trenches captured from the Boches only a few months ago. Naturally they do not like this and it is not any too quiet here. The Germans started pounding at us something fierce about noon yesterday and continued throughout the afternoon and evening until our trenches looked pretty sick. As our batteries did not answer, we were feeling nervous to a certain extent, but later we found out why the batteries did not reply.

‘The Germans were bombarding along a seven-kilometre front and the wise French artillery boys knew that the Boches would not try to make us a visit on so wide a line; so they simply waited.

‘The Germans are known for making late calls and we expected them about midnight. Sure enough at eleven o’clock

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they again let loose something fierce and I started to say good-bye to the United States of America, for it certainly was hot. Then the Germans started to attack along a front of about two kilometres and the French seventy-fives let go. Believe me, those Boches surely received a shock. Once more, however, they started a bombardment which lasted until 3.30 A.M. Then they again began an infantry attack, but we objected to their calling at such an hour. Now they must have a very bad opinion of us, for we treated them roughly.

‘This second attack, which they wanted to make at dawn, was to be a surprise, but one of our aviators, who is an early bird, was flying over their trenches. He noticed their preparations and signalled to our artillery. The Boches certainly saw some fireworks! The nearest they got to us was to a hospital or to the happy hunting grounds. They seem to have learned a lesson, for now they are behaving nicely.

‘Those who say that all the French soldiers are tired and fed up should have seen the boys to the left of us. They are some soldiers! When on leave they may do a little kicking, but it is a different story when they are at the front. They don’t receive the Boches with any of that “kamarade” stuff, but with all the fireworks on hand.’

Schuyler Deming was fatally wounded during the German bombardment. It was his first day in the trenches, and a huge torpedo hurled over by an enemy trench-mortar exploded near him; his left leg was torn off just below the knee, and bits of splinter lodged in his stomach. Deming was hastened to a field hospital, and died there on June 22. He was born at Columbus, Ohio, on March 24, 1884.

The Legion was taken out of the Berry-au-Bac trenches on July 7, and transported in auto-busses to Dampierre-de-l’Aube, one of the most agreeable repose cantonments the regiment had yet seen. The Legionnaires were kindly received by the inhabitants of the town, and enjoyed the manœuvres and train-

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ing in new combat formation which were carried out in the big woods and wide prairies around Dampierre. The chief point of the new formation was that every section was divided into two attack squads and two reserve squads; during a battle the reserve squads were to keep about twenty metres behind the attack squads.

General Gouraud passed the regiment in review, and decorated a number of the officers and men with medals they had won at Auberive. On July 12 the flag of the regiment, accompanied by a guard of honor, one of whom was Nick Karayinis, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, was taken to Paris, to participate in the great military review there on July 14. The next issue of the *Bulletin* of the French armies told, in an account of the ceremony in Paris, of a new homage paid to the Legion:

Saturday, July 14, 1917, the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère* received the just recompense due to a striking bravery. Five times cited in the Order of the Army, it saw itself awarded before any other troop the yellow and green *fourragère*. Its immortal glory has been proclaimed over the face of the earth.

After the declaration of war by the United States, several Americans enlisted in the Legion, including Richard Allen Blount, of Wilson, North Carolina; Garrett Foley, of Chicago, Illinois; O. L. McLellan, of New Orleans, Louisiana; and Walter Raymond Pierce, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Blount was about twenty-three years old, and had lived abroad for several years with his father, a wholesale drug manufacturer. Foley was just out of Harvard College, while McLellan was the dean of all the American volunteers in the Foreign Legion during the World War.

McLellan was a former Louisiana State Senator, and was sixty-five years old when the United States entered the war against Germany. He first tried to enlist in the United States Army, but was refused because of his age. He thereupon embarked for

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France, and, giving his age as forty years, volunteered in the Foreign Legion as soon as he arrived in Paris.

Shortly after he reached the Legion's *dépôt* at Lyon, McLellan made the acquaintance of a seventeen-year-old French youth, who soon asked the American for a loan of one thousand francs. McLellan refused, whereupon the boy drew a revolver and fired two shots at him; one bullet went wild, while the second hit McLellan in the shoulder and slightly wounded him. McLellan was taken to the hospital, but was soon well enough to rejoin the Legion at La Valbonne. His assailant was arrested, and callously confessed that he had intended to kill the American volunteer and throw his body into the Rhone.

Arthur C. Watson, of New Bedford, Massachusetts, a young Harvard graduate and cousin of Kenneth Weeks, enlisted in the Foreign Legion in Paris, but by an error was sent to the First Regiment of the Legion in Morocco. There he was put in a battalion composed almost entirely of Germans, who tried to make life disagreeable for him. After campaigning with the Legion in the *bled*, Watson succeeded in getting transferred to the First Regiment of the *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, where by bravery during the fighting around Azilal he won his stripes as *brigadier* (corporal). Later he served in France with the Sixth *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, and was in the trenches in Alsace with that corps when the Armistice was signed.

With the purchase of the Virgin Islands by the American Government, Sorenson, the lone volunteer in the Legion from the Danish West Indies, came under the United States flag. Sorenson was a former policeman at St. Thomas, and had enlisted in the Legion in 1914. He was buried alive by a shell explosion during the Champagne attack of September, 1915, but managed to dig himself free, and apologized to the captain because the straps of his pack were broken and he had lost his rifle. He conducted himself with bravery on many occasions, and was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre*.

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John Bowe arrived at the Lyon *dépôt* in the early summer of 1917, after having been under treatment in five different hospitals. His health was badly impaired, and he was granted an indefinite convalescence leave; he returned to the United States, where he lectured on his experiences in the French Army and engaged in various war propaganda work.

Billy Thorin was also invalided out of the Legion, with a pension, and was allowed to return to America. He had been desperately ill with tuberculosis in the hospital, and was several times reported dying, but finally thought he had conquered his disease.

Henry Claude came to Paris on leave late in June, overstayed the eight days allowed him, and deserted from the Legion. Paul Rockwell was to blame for his desertion: whenever he met any of the American volunteers on leave, Rockwell always sent out to the boys at the front a few bottles of whiskey and packages of cigarettes. He gave the customary parcel to Claude the morning before that Legionnaire was to rejoin his regiment. Claude went back to the hotel to get his belongings, and opened one of the bottles of whiskey to see if it was up to standard.

One drink led to another, and when Claude came to his senses, he realized he should have left Paris several days earlier, and that he was already posted at his regiment as a deserter. His bravery at the front had wiped out the five years' suspended sentence he had already received at Lyon, but he knew that if caught he would now be court-martialled again, and that things would go badly for him. He made his way to Bordeaux, where he could get a boat back to America, and wrote Rockwell:

'Do not think too hard of me. I was so long overdue that I had to do it. I am in a hell of a fix here; no money; I eat when I get a chance and sleep out-of-doors nights. To-night I do not know where I am going to sleep, and to-day I have not had a bite to eat.

'I went to see the American Consul here and told him all

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about it. He said it was impossible for him to do anything. I also asked him if it was possible for me to join the American Army here. He said it was impossible, so what am I to do? If I went back to the Legion, it would go hard with me; I know it would. I did my bit there; now I want to join the American Army where I belong.'

Claude finally got work on a boat and returned to America. Within two months he enlisted in the United States Army, and returned to France as a corporal in Battery A, Eighty-First Field Artillery, where he conducted himself well.

Claude had what might be called a desertion complex. He confided to his comrades that he had deserted from both the United States Army and Navy before the war, and from the English Navy during the war, each time under the same circumstances as when he quit the Foreign Legion. He was an excellent and courageous soldier, and had been made a corporal in the Legion a short time before he deserted. His comrades at the front did not judge him severely for his action, though they did object to his consuming their whiskey.

3

The United States flag, which was carried by the American volunteers in the Foreign Legion in August, 1914, and on which they had written their names, was formally presented to the French Government on July 4, 1917. After the death of René Phélizot in March, 1915, the flag was returned from the hospital at Fismes to the Americans with the *Deuxième Étranger* around Craonnelle, and was entrusted to Robert Soubiran. It was brought to Paris and left there for safe-keeping, after the Champagne offensive in September, 1915.

When the United States came into the war, it was decided to offer the flag to the French Army, and the French Minister of War wrote the following letter of acceptance:

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‘You have kindly offered in the name of your compatriots who volunteered in the Second Foreign Regiment, to give us the Star-Spangled Banner which has guided them in battle for nearly three years, to deposit it with a commemorative tablet in the Invalides Museum. I accept with eagerness, in the name of the French Army, this glorious emblem. This flag will thus henceforth be a striking testimony of the devotion to France of the American volunteers who, immediately after hostilities began, came to fight in the ranks of our Army for right and for civilization.’

The impressive and stirring presentation ceremony took place in the marvellous old court of honor of the Hôtel des Invalides, where the first American and other foreign volunteers had been received on August 21, 1914. All the American Legionnaires and aviators still in the French ranks were given special leave to come to Paris for the occasion, and they took their place alongside Marshal Joffre, Président Poincaré, the French Minister of War, the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces, the American Ambassador, and other dignitaries and representatives of the French, American, and Allied Governments, in a hollow square formed by veteran French troops and the recently arrived vanguard of the American Expeditionary Forces.

Dr. Samuel Watson, a well-known American clergyman in Paris, made the presentation speech, and first addressed the American Commanding General, as follows:

‘General, it is my privilege to transmit this banner on behalf of the first American soldiers who fought for France, our American Legionnaires, who in 1914 enrolled themselves in the Foreign Legion to fight for France and liberty, who gave all they had to give, who are proud to have been the pioneers of that great American Army which now arrives under your leadership to take up the task they laid down. Your flag now replaces their flag. Therefore, their flag is now given to that great

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treasure-house of the heart of France — the Musée des Invalides.'

Dr. Watson then addressed himself to General Niox, Governor of the Hôtel des Invalides, and said:

'It is for me a great honor to be the representative of my compatriots this day in presenting you this flag — their flag which they so much loved. They loved it until death. They loved it for what it was worth.

'How prophetic has this banner been, the first American flag to float over the heads of those who fought on French soil for ideals represented by the Star-Spangled Banner, which have been the life and soul of France! It was not permitted our brave men in the Legion to carry the flag openly, as the pennant of the chief leading his soldiers to the assault, but they carried it, nevertheless. One after another wore this flag draped around his body as a belt — the life belt of his soul. One after another was wounded or killed, and thus the American flag has received its first baptism of blood in this combat, where now it has its appointed place.

'This flag was the prophecy of what has now come to pass. Now that the great Republic overseas comes in a body to take its stand where it has ever been in spirit, we render service to our dead comrades who died for their beloved France in asking you to accept this treasure for which they gave their lives. It also is an inspiration to the living to be worthy of these pioneers who preceded them along the road to eternal liberty and redemption of justice.'

President Poincaré and General Niox made appropriate addresses of acceptance, being careful not to wound the susceptibilities of the American officials present, but praising warmly the spirit and ideals of the American volunteers who engaged in the struggle against Germany while their own country was still neutral. The flag was then placed in the Hall of Honor of the great French War Museum at the Hôtel des Invalides, near

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hundreds of other battle-stained and historic banners. Later were ranged beside it the flags carried in August, 1914, by the Swiss, Norwegian, Armenian, Swedish, Italian, Ottoman, Dutch, Roumanian, Danish, Czech, Belgian, Luxembourger, Greek, Catalanian, Syrian, Polish, and Portuguese Volunteer Corps.

Chapter XVI

VERDUN

THE name of Verdun had been on the lips of the Legionnaires for some time, as they knew by the way they were being drilled that an important operation was impending in some sector or other. Christopher Charles wrote from Dampierre on July 26:

‘The fireworks are coming off sooner than I expected and we are very busy at present. We all feel pretty badly over the way we have been treated; have been trying hard for our transfer, but recently received a letter that has put me out of business altogether, for the War Department in Washington does not seem to think we are worthy of a U.S. uniform.

‘Well, I am not going to lose any sleep over that, for we have other things to do. Every one of the boys is going to break his neck in the next fight and show old Pop Wilson that we have no yellow streak in us. I guess it is my turn to kick the bucket this trip, for it is generally an old-timer that gets it each fight, and as Casey and I are the oldest at the front and Casey is map-maker at Regimental H.Q., I guess it is up to me. I don’t care, but something I would like to know is who I am fighting for? America will not have me and France does not want me. I only wish I could tell old Pop Wilson how I feel, but I guess it is not right for me to feel that way.’

While the regiment continued its training at Dampierre, a precursory detachment of pioneers, telephonists, observers, and specialist officers was sent to the Verdun sector on August 2, to occupy itself with certain details and arrange for proper re-victualling of food and munitions during the attack, and for

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telephonic liaison with the other assault regiments. Nothing that could aid in assuring the success of the operation, which was designed to improve the French positions between Avo-court and Bezouville, was left to chance, and never was an attack better prepared. Pétain had crowded into the sector twenty-four hundred guns, heavy and light, and the preliminary bombardment of the German positions started on August 13. It had already been demonstrated that a profusion of shells before an assault meant a minimum of deaths and wounds for the attackers, and Pétain's orders to his artillerymen were to use shells unsparingly.

The Legion and the rest of the Moroccan Division left the region of Dampierre in auto-busses on the 12th, and moved up near Verdun.

'Good-bye to our nice little village and the good little omelette I used to get every morning,' wrote Jack Moyet; 'good-bye to the tranquil life, good-bye civilization. When we arrive, after a long seven hours' run — where, we have no idea — we are on a road that must not be very far from the front, because we are forbidden to smoke. After a few minutes' rest, the captain gives the order, "*Sac au dos; par quatre; marchez!*" and we shoulder our packs and march eight or ten kilometres, reaching a camp at 11.40 P.M. Before five minutes we hear two German shells explode — the first time for me for over a month.

'On the 13th and 14th, complete repose. It rained, and we listened to the artillery preparation which seemed very strong. Reveille the next morning at five-thirty. To-night we are to go up to the trenches. Everybody is gay, nearly all the company is singing and laughing. During the morning we are given new clothes, cartridges, grenades, and everything necessary for an attack. At one o'clock, new orders: we are to leave to-morrow night, as the artillery preparation has been found insufficient.'

The Legionnaires were told the task assigned to them: the capture of the ruins of Cumières village and wood, of Goose Hill

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and Hill 265, which was crowned by a powerful *fortin* and is the culminating point of a long range of abrupt hillocks which a bend in the river designs on the left bank of the Meuse.

The Legion broke camp about sundown on the evening of the 18th, and started on the long march to the trenches. Each man had two days' rations, including a pound of chocolate, fifteen biscuits, two tins of sardines and two of beef, and no overcoat or blankets. Christopher Charles wrote:

'All the boys in the different companies were singing as they passed through the villages and, believe me, all the people seemed surprised to see a regiment go away to a fight singing after three years of war.

'We arrived in the trenches about three o'clock on the morning of the 19th. The Germans must have known we were coming, for they gave us a first-class welcome in the line of shells. We slept all through the day of the 19th, with our gas-masks on, as the Boches were throwing gas-shells, and about midnight we began preparing for the fireworks that were to start at an early hour of the morning.

'We all moved up about 3 A.M. on the 20th and lay in a shallow little trench between our lines and the Germans, where we were to await the order to go forward. I can tell you that it was a mighty uncomfortable position, for the Germans were banging away at our lines and the shells were falling a little short. The French were doing the same thing at the German lines and their shells were also falling a little short, so that we were under two fires, and my bones certainly seemed to rattle at times.

'At 20 to 5 the order came to go forward, and you can be sure we all were glad to get out of the living hell we had been under for nearly two hours. We got through the curtain fire pretty easily; the shells were burning around our feet a bit, but with a few quick steps we were beyond the most dangerous point. We got to the first German lines without any trouble and found a few lost Germans who did not seem to know whether they were

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in France or Russia, and I do not think they cared very much, for they had been under the bombardment for six days and were glad to get out of it.

'We kept on going with a little grenade fighting here and there, and by seven o'clock we had gained three kilometres in depth and two in width. We took Cumières or what was left of it, which was a few stone walls, also a wood and a hill. There we rested until the afternoon, for we had done some hill-climbing and were pretty tired out. While we were resting, I met quite a few of the boys: Mouvet, Moyet, and Nock, who certainly seemed to be looking for some sport. Later I met Philippe, who is a new lad, but, believe me, he looked as though he had been used to this game all his life. I also saw Barry and Paringfield; they both must have had an awful argument with some barbed wire and got the worst of it, judging from their clothes.

'About four in the afternoon we started out to do a little more work and take a hill, which we took in an hour, and there we stopped for the night. During the night the Germans made three counter-attacks, but did not succeed.'

Jack Moyet described his experience on the 20th as follows:

'Just a few minutes before "going over," a big German shell burst just in front of me. How I escaped I don't know; my haversack was completely destroyed and my rifle was covered with earth. A boy with me was killed, yet I was not touched.

'With a terrible barrier fire ahead of us, over we went. It was so foggy we could not see three yards ahead of us. I rolled a cigarette, for our masks had prevented us smoking all night. My squad and Mouvet's lost their way after half an hour and we had no idea where we were. Suddenly we heard the noise of a machine gun in action, so we made our way in the direction and found ourselves at a railroad and saw some of our own men who told us where to find our battalion. In another five minutes we found our company — in Cumières. I had not yet seen a

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German. There we stopped a short time, digging a little trench. Then on we went again, and took two woods.

'The Germans were in retreat. My company had only one man killed and another slightly wounded. After two hours more we were relieved by another company of our regiment, and we went on reserve. There I met two Germans — Brandenburgers — who had just been taken prisoners. One could speak English and he told me that it was the first time he had come to the front. They were both musicians and were sent up because the Germans had no reserves. "There's a lot of difference," one said, "between the music of the guns and the music I have been used to make."

'At three o'clock we started to advance again, my company the first. During our bombardment, a lot of Germans surrendered; they were all in, they told us. Our captain sent up a light, and we started the new advance.

'We had a good laugh at seeing two rabbits running away in front of us. Our company started to run and ran so fast that we took in ten minutes what we were supposed to take in half an hour. Then each man dug himself a hole and we stopped there all the night, one sleeping, and one watching. I must confess that as yet I had not seen a German with a rifle.'

The Legionnaires sang *La Madelon* as they took Cumières, and their capture of the *fortin* on Hill 265 was like 'draining a glass of wine,' to quote an eye-witness of the attack. Generals Pétain and de Castelnau and a group of high American officers, including the Commanding General, were interested spectators of the latter operation.

'One would believe we were watching a fine manœuvre at a camp in the interior,' said General Pétain admiringly to the other officers.

General Pétain decided to ask the Legion, still hot and enthused from its success, to take Regnéville, an operation at first contemplated for a later date. Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet ac-

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cepted the proposition with eagerness, and how it was carried out was described in a few words by Machine-Gunner Charles:

'We were pretty lazy on the 21st and did not start forward until the afternoon, when we were told to take a village. Our seventy-fives kept a barrage just ahead of us as we advanced. Barry must have seen a rum shop, for he was in an awful hurry to get into the town, and was hit by a piece of shell. Some of our sections had a lot of grenade fighting in the *boyaux*, but by nightfall we had captured Regnéville and a number of prisoners.

'In a dugout we found a badly wounded German who had been there for three days. He lay cursing his comrades for stealing his watch and money and leaving him to die. We sent him back to a stretcher-bearers' post.

'We pushed on about five hundred metres farther and there the fight ended. We installed ourselves in the orchards overlooking the Meuse beyond the village, and worked all night long putting the position in shape to be defended should the Germans counter-attack.

'We had a nice party in a shell-hole with German wine and jam, and under our tent covers we smoked a few cigars which the Boches forgot in their hurry to get away.

'Once more Wilson's unworthy citizens proved their worth, in the most famous battle sector in France. Corporal Guy Agostini met a brave death in an heroic manner. After two days of hard fighting, he died trying to save two comrades of his section. Two of his grenadiers were battling against some Germans, when the latter rushed the two boys, who both fell wounded.

'Corporal Agostini, who was a little in the rear, rushed forward and brought back one of the boys to shelter. He returned for the second, but found him dead. Just as he arrived at our trench with the body, a large shell burst, and Agostini was hit in the temple and instantly killed.

'Our little friend Blount also did some fine work; he took thirty

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prisoners single-handed, but could not continue his work, as he was slightly wounded.

'Ivan Nock and Marius Philippe were both wounded and gassed by the same shell explosion; they were taken away to the hospital, but are not in a dangerous condition. Barry's wound is not serious either. Jack Noe was slightly wounded the first day of the attack, just enough to get a good rest in the hospital. Sartoris fell ill just before the attack, and was taken to the infirmary protesting that he would be back in the ranks in a few days.'

The capture of Regnéville, where the Legionnaires found four heavy cannon the surprised Germans had not had time to remove, was the last act of the 1917 battle of Verdun. The Legion had taken six hundred and eighty prisoners, including twenty officers and forty-three under-officers, belonging to four different regiments, fifteen German cannon and thirteen machine guns, with a vast quantity of material, and had recaptured a heavy French marine gun. The losses of the regiment were smaller than in any previous battle, less than four hundred men killed and wounded.

The total number of prisoners made by the French was ninety-one hundred, with thirty guns and twenty-two mine-throwers. The German pressure on Verdun was permanently relieved by the victory.

The Marching Regiment of the Foreign Legion was mentioned for the sixth time in the Order of the Army. The citation was signed by General Guillaumet and read:

On August 20, 1917, under the energetic leadership of its chief, Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, threw itself forward to assault a village and a wood, both of which were powerfully organized. Despite the difficulties and the lie of the land, it captured the position with such dash that, notwithstanding our own barriers of artillery fire, the Legion passed beyond the final objective which had been assigned to it nearly three kilometres from the point of departure.

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Undertaking immediately a new operation which had been fixed for a later date and in an entirely different direction, this corps gave proof of its fine manœuvring qualities by making itself master of a series of heights and then of a village which the enemy had previously taken at heavy sacrifice. The Legion thus assured possession of two and a half kilometres of front and captured six hundred and eighty prisoners with many cannon and machine guns.

Nick Karayinis was decorated with the *Médaille Militaire*, accompanied by a third citation in Army Orders:

An active Legionnaire and an *élite* grenadier. August 20, 1917, won the admiration of every one by his courage and his contempt for danger, leading his crew to the conquest of a trench which was defended with energy, and which was captured along a length of fifteen hundred metres after several hours of desperate combat. He took numerous prisoners. Already twice cited in the Order of the Day.

Ivan Nock won his second citation, which said:

A Legionnaire with motives of the highest type, he is a grenadier possessing superb contempt for danger. Taking part August 21, 1917, in a perilous scouting expedition, he protected with audacity the progress of this reconnaissance, and was wounded in the course of the operation.

Christopher Charles was mentioned as 'a brave, courageous soldier and excellent machine-gunner; he distinguished himself in Champagne, 1915; at the Somme, 1916; at Verdun, August, 1917, by the indirect fire of his piece held back the enemy reënforcements. Has been wounded once.'

Oscar Mouvet was cited and proposed for a corporalship, and Richard Blount and Jack Moyet were awarded the *Croix de Guerre*. William Paringfield was promised a citation on the battlefield, but his chief, Lieutenant Benoit, was killed a few hours later, the only Legion officer slain during the action.

The Legionnaires remained two weeks in the conquered positions, putting the trenches and defenses in good condition, and

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strengthening the line which was now stabilized on the left bank of the Meuse. The kitchens were established under the banks of the old railroad, as near as possible to the trenches. Outposts and patrols kept up small but continual combats with the Germans, who had hastily thrown into the sector seven fresh divisions, for fear of further advances by the French.

The Legion was relieved on September 4, and moved back to the region of Rampont. Jack Moyet said: 'When we saw the "Blue Devils" (Alpine *Chasseurs*) coming to relieve us, we certainly felt happy, for we were black as niggers and full of lice. During all the attack the food was very bad; we had rice three times, potatoes once, macaroni four times, and the rest of the time, beans. We were about all in, and the Germans had been bombarding our position every day.'

Christopher Charles commented on the Verdun battlefield: 'Although I had heard so much about this famous sector and felt pretty shaky when we were told we were to go there, I now think I had rather go into a fight here than anywhere else in France, for we certainly had the guns behind us this time. The bombardment was perfect and the best we ever had. There was not a bit of ground which we took that had not been swept by a shell. As late as eight days after the battle there were Germans who dug themselves out of underground passages and gave themselves up.'

German aviators came over and bombed the military hospital at Vadelincourt, where many of the wounded Legionnaires were under treatment. The wooden buildings were set on fire, and as the panic-stricken soldiers fled from their flaming beds, the enemy airmen swooped down and machine-gunned them, and killed many of them and their nurses.

Algernon Sartoris rejoined his regiment, and when he learned of the death of Guy Agostini, who had been his corporal, he wrote: 'I wish that every American soldier who is coming to

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France could know of the gallant death of Agostini. He was a quiet and most worthy youth. His prophecy on receiving the *Croix de Guerre* after Auberive was: "My next cross will be a wooden one." He was a pure idealist and a brave soldier.'

While the American Legionnaires were aiding in the capture of Cumières and Regnéville, their old comrade John Cordonnier was fighting not far away from them. His regiment, the One Hundred and Sixty-Third Line Infantry, captured on August 20 the much-fought-for, sinister Dead Man's Hill.

'We attacked and carried a bad line of German trenches on Dead Man's Hill,' the laconic Cordonnier wrote. 'My battalion alone captured one hundred and twenty prisoners. It was a hard fight, but we lost remarkably few men.'

The brilliant victory at Verdun completely restored the morale of the entire French Army, only a small portion of which had ever been affected by the wave of pessimism following the premature ending of the spring offensive, and revived in the civilian population confidence in a final victory.

2

The Legion went into camp at Bois l'Évêque, along with the other regiments of the Moroccan Division, which was now commanded by General Daugan, as its former chief, General Degoutte, had been promoted commander of an army corps. To break the monotony of drill and manœuvre, there was a series of football matches and field-sports contests between teams from the different regiments. William Paringfield won first place in the long and short distance foot-races between the Legionnaires.

General Pétain, Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies, and General Gérard, commander of an army, passed the troops of the Moroccan Division in review on September 27, and Gen-

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eral Pétain decorated the flag of the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère* with the Cross of the Legion of Honor, accompanied by the following citation:

A marvellous regiment which is animated by hatred for the enemy and the very highest spirit of sacrifice.

In Artois, May 9, 1915, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, threw itself forward to the assault of the *Ouvrages Blancs*, breaking through with a single blow all the enemy organizations, carrying Hill 140, pushing on to Carency and Souchez.

In Champagne, September 25, 1915, under the orders first of Lieutenant-Colonel Lecomte-Denis, then of Commandant Rozet, conquered the Wagram work, north of Souain.

September 28, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, triumphed over a powerful organization and, pushing on to the trenches and wood of Navarin Farm, captured them.

In the Somme, July 4, 1916, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Cot, after having crossed an open and exposed space of eight hundred metres, swept by mitrailleuses, conquered with the bayonet Belloy-en-Santerre and kept it, despite an intense bombardment, against the violent and repeated efforts of the enemy.

In Champagne, before the hillocks of Moronvilliers, April 17, 1917, under the orders first of Lieutenant-Colonel Duriez, then of Commandant Deville, launched itself forward to the attack of a resolute enemy, three times superior in number. By a hand-to-hand combat, uninterrupted during five days and five nights, carried the trenches of the Gulf and contributed to making the enemy evacuate the village of Auberive by taking it from behind.

At Verdun, August 20, 1917, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, captured the village of Cumières and its wood, with such dash that it passed beyond the final objective assigned to it. It then rendered itself master of Goose Hill and of Regnéville.

The French Government had recently passed a law making it possible for private soldiers, corporals, and non-commissioned officers to win by extraordinary feats of arms and heroism on the battlefield the Cross of the Legion of Honor, a medal

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hitherto reserved solely for officers. General Pétain decorated with the medal three Spanish corporals of the Legion.

Christopher Charles wrote concerning the review:

‘To-day was one more great day for the Legion, for we were given the highest honor that a regiment could receive. The Commander-in-Chief gave our flag the Legion of Honor for the good work we did for fifteen days in the rain and mud in one of the most famous sectors in France. We are the first regiment in France to have won the Legion of Honor and I can assure you all the boys who suffered through the battle are mighty proud of what the Commander-in-Chief said to them to-day.

‘He said that we have been a perfect whirlwind regiment in carrying off honors and that we were so far advanced in honors that the *fourragère* which has not yet been made has been won. That is the one the color of the Legion of Honor. He said that if we still kept up this good work, he would be obliged to give us the Legion of Honor in its highest merits.

‘All the Division was present at the review and the regiments certainly looked fine. When General Pétain came there were at least twenty aeroplanes flying over the Division.

‘Moyet received his War Cross to-day. He certainly deserved it for all his good work.’

The regiment was strengthened in October by the arrival of the remnants of the battalion which had been sent to the Dardanelles in March, 1915, under the orders of Commandant Geay. This battalion had made history in the Near East. Its losses had been terrific, and among the wounded were Corporal Didier, the Moor, and Zannis, the Constantinople Greek, of the original American squad of the *Premier Étranger*, who had volunteered for service in the Near East.

The entire Moroccan Division went into the trenches around Flirey, in Lorraine, on October 3. Ivan Nock wrote: ‘The sector was calm, but with the advent of the *Division Marocaine* has lost its tranquillity, as might have been expected.’

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The Germans started an incessant bombardment with gas and shrapnel shells, and harried the French lines by indirect machine-gun fire. There was a constant patrol warfare in the Mortmare Wood and in the immense mine craters, relics of former bitter struggles. *Coups de main* were executed on both sides, one after another, and the sector became a very animated one. Cold, rainy weather set in, a presage of the fourth miserable winter in the trenches. Christopher Charles wrote:

‘We are in the trenches where we expect to be for eighteen days. The most unpleasant thing is the weather, for there is nothing that bothers us more than the rain. We have a fine cabin and have a bright fire burning all night long, so that when we are called to go on sentry duty we certainly start growling. To leave a nice, warm spot and go out and wade through the *boyau* for three hundred metres in water and mud to where our machine gun is, and then have to stand out there in the rain for hours, puts us all in an unpleasant humor. Three of us are nursing swollen jaws from running into a turn in the *boyau* and we all will be pleased when this weather clears up a bit.

‘As far as shelling is concerned, a shell drops over once in a while, and it seems like being lost in the wilderness after a place like Verdun.’

Algernon Sartoris made his first trip to the firing line. He was given a job as donkey-boy and water-carrier for his battalion; there was no drinking-water to be had near the trenches, and the Legionnaires were supplied from wells several kilometres in the rear of the lines. Sartoris was put in charge of three small donkeys and twice every twenty-four hours — once by day and once by night — he loaded the beasts with water-bags and led them through the communication trenches up to where his comrades were on guard in the front-line positions.

‘We try to poke fun at him,’ wrote Machine-Gunner Charles, ‘but he takes everything lightly and we certainly have to admire him. He says that he likes the job. Lately he has given up

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drinking; I never thought that he could, but he is making good and I am pleased, for I like the old lad.'

Richard Blount was wounded in the arm by a bit of shrapnel during one of the daily bombardments, and taken away to the hospital from which he had but recently been discharged after his Verdun wound.

A new *fourragère*, red — the color of the Legion of Honor — was created especially for the Legion 'because of its brilliant exploits in the course of the campaign,' and was conferred on the corps on November 3, with an Army Order signed by General Pétain. The Legionnaires were immensely proud of this further recognition of their courage and merit, and were more than ever ready to attempt any feat asked of them by the French High Command. Ivan Nock wrote: 'I would really prefer to stay in the Legion. I'm pretty sure no U.S. regiment will ever be as distinguished as the *Légion Étrangère*. Besides, I'm beginning to think I'm a Frenchman. My aunt wrote me the other day saying, "You French have done such splendid things, etc., etc."'

William Paringfield changed to a machine-gun company; he had been very disappointed not to get the *Croix de Guerre* after the Verdun battle, and hoped to get a better chance to distinguish himself in his new post. He went back behind the lines for a short course of instruction as machine-gunner, and immediately after returning to the firing trenches volunteered to go out on a *coup de main*. These *coups* had become very dangerous; the enemy artillery always kept silent during the French preliminary bombardment, but started a hellish barrage fire as soon as the attacking infantry left their shelters. It was the custom throughout the French Army to award the *Croix de Guerre* to all the participants in a *coup de main* whenever prisoners were brought back into the trenches.

Paringfield and a small band of picked men went out on a *coup de main* after dark on November 10. Just as they jumped

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into the enemy trenches, the young American was hit in the stomach by several shell-splinters. He was taken back to the field hospital, and died there the following day. His last hours were happy, in spite of his agony: Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet came to his bedside and decorated him with the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*, with an exceptionally beautiful citation, which read:

Enlisted voluntarily for the duration of the war. A volunteer for the execution of a *coup de main*, he rushed forward into the enemy trenches with great intrepidity. Having been very grievously wounded, he preoccupied himself only with the success of the operation, declaring with gayety: 'There are some prisoners, all is well.' Died from his wounds.

Paringfield was one of the youngest volunteers in the Foreign Legion. He was born in Butte, Montana, on December 22, 1897; and had travelled extensively with his parents, who were in the theatrical business. At one time he lived in China for several months. He was beloved by his fellow Legionnaires as a cheerful little comrade and a brave fighter.

Theodore Haas volunteered for the *coup de main* along with Paringfield, and won his second citation in the Order of the Day:

A brave and resolute Legionnaire. He distinguished himself by his ardor and *sang-froid* during the *coup de main* on November 10, 1917.

O. L. McLellan, Garrett Foley, and Walter Pierce arrived from La Valbonne with a detachment of reënforcements. 'McLellan marched as sturdily as the best of us,' to quote Christopher Charles, but he fell ill from exposure, and was forced to return to the *dépôt* at Lyon. Foley shot himself in the shoulder while on guard at night, and was taken away to the hospital.

Pierce deserted after a few days in the trenches, but was caught by gendarmes as he was *en route* to Paris, and brought back to the front. He was court-martialled, and claimed that a

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captain in the United States Army had induced him to desert by promising to arrange everything for him with the Legion and get him into the American Army. Sentence was suspended, and Pierce was sent back to the trenches. He deserted again, and this time was returned to the Legion from a training camp of the American Expeditionary Forces, where he had taken refuge, by American military policemen.

Pierce was court-martialled for the second time. His attitude before the court was very disagreeable, and his defense did not ring true; he was sentenced to five years' hard labor, and sent away to a penal battalion in Northern Africa.

Charles Trinkard had received his *brevet* as an aeroplane pilot on July 24, 1917, and joined the *Escadrille* N. 68 at the front on September 1. His aviation field was near Toul, and not a great distance from the village where the Legion went for repose, so that he was able to see his former comrades from time to time. Trinkard was very anxious to distinguish himself as an aviator, and never missed an opportunity to go on air patrol, but there was not a great deal of aerial activity in his sector.

Jack Casey, Christopher Charles, Alfred Bustillos, Sartoris, and a number of other Legionnaires were talking together in the street of a village behind the lines on the morning of Thanksgiving Day, November 29, when they saw three French aeroplanes looping the loop and doing other aerial acrobatics over their heads. Suddenly one of the machines wing-slipped while making a vertical turn, and not having sufficient altitude crashed into the ground and was completely wrecked.

The Legionnaires rushed forward and pulled the pilot, who was already dead, from the wreckage.

'It was Trinkard,' wrote Charles. 'His spine and both legs were broken, and he must have died instantly from the shock. He was wearing a khaki uniform and the Legion's red *fourragère*. The first men to reach the wrecked machine did not know who had fallen, but when they recognized by the distinctive deco-

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ration of our corps that one of their comrades was dead, they were mightily grieved. All the American volunteers are feeling especially sad, for Trinkard was a fine lad and had done great work in the Legion. It seems a shame that a boy who had been through so many battles and had suffered so much should die by such an accident. Trinkard did more than his duty in this war, and did it cheerfully. It is with sad hearts that we will attend his funeral on Saturday.'

Trinkard had known that his old comrades were stationed in the village, and was saluting them by his aerial antics, as was often done by aviators. His body was taken back to his aviation field, and buried in the cemetery there, after an imposing military funeral. Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet delegated eight of the dead aviator's former comrades to represent the Legion at the sad ceremony, and Oscar Mouvet took up a collection in Trinkard's former battalion for a wreath. Two small American flags were put in Trinkard's coffin and a large one over his grave, by the American Legionnaires.

| The Germans tried a surprise *coup de main* against the Legionnaires on December 3. At eight o'clock on a bitter cold morning, after a preparatory bombardment of only fifteen minutes, forty picked *Stosstruppen* rushed across No-Man's-Land and tried to break into an advanced Legion trench. Six of the attackers got back to their own lines alive; one was made prisoner; and the others were left hanging dead or wounded in the barbed-wire entanglements.

'The Boches certainly must be crazy to try to get away with that stuff at eight in the morning,' commented Christopher Charles, whose machine gun was partly responsible for the failure of the German trench raid.

| Oscar Mouvet was slightly wounded in the face by a shell-splinter on December 8; Jack Moyet fell ill with pneumonia from exposure in the water-filled trenches, and it began to look as though there would be no American Legionnaires left to don

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their national uniform, should the United States Army decide to take them over.

Ivan Nock wrote from the trenches on December 15: 'Returning *permissionnaires* tell us that "*à l'arrière on tient bon*" (in the rear they are holding their own), which, of course, is a comfort. Poor civilians! They do make so much *mauvais sang* over the war that they are a source of worry to us. Hence the comfort in knowing they "*tiennent bon*." Seriously, one must come to the front — the real front — to find a decent morale.'

The civilians were 'holding their own' because the Radical Socialist Cabinet, which had been losing the war for France, was overthrown on November 13, and Georges Clemenceau was made Prime Minister. Clemenceau at once assumed dictatorial powers; he surrounded himself with Ministers of undoubted patriotism, declared 'we have one sole, simple duty, to stand fast with the soldier; to live, suffer and fight with him,' and set about cleaning out the Augean Stables of the Paris political and journalistic world. He pressed the treason charges against Caillaux, former Minister of the Interior Malvy, who was surrounded with spies and traitors and had allowed pacifist and pro-German campaigns to be waged openly throughout France; Senator Humbert, an ex-waiter in cheap cafés who had risen to political power; the mysterious Bolo Pacha, and numerous Deputies and others whose activities on behalf of Germany had been more than suspicious.

Public opinion in France supported Clemenceau in his determination to win the war, and the morale of the entire country improved steadily from the day he came into power. The men at the front faced the horrors of another winter campaign with all the more fortitude because they now knew that the Government in Paris was wholly supporting them.

Ever since the arrival in France of American troops continuous efforts had been made by their friends in Paris and elsewhere to get the American Legionnaires accepted for service by the United States military authorities. Among others, General Frank Parker, who as Military Attaché in Paris had known and appreciated most of the American Legionnaires and aviators, put in a good word to push their transfer, while Paul Rockwell wrote in the 'Chicago Daily News' and its associated newspapers:

'I wish to call especial attention to the attitude of the United States War Department toward the American volunteers in the Legion. Of the several score boys from the United States who have fought during the war in the Legion, only about ten are left active at the front. Virtually every one of them has been decorated with the French War Cross for courage and devotion.

'As soon as their own country severed relations with Germany, these courageous American boys wrote directly to President Wilson and to various other State and Army officials offering their trained services to the United States Army. Some of them came to Paris on leave and spoke with members of the American Military Mission and to various persons at the United States Embassy here, without getting any satisfaction either by word or by writing. Not one bit of official attention has been paid by the United States Government to these brave American soldiers, who have been so often honored by France. Yet at the present writing the United States War Department is preparing to take over from the French military authorities the American aviators — trained at great expense by France — who form part of the Lafayette *Escadrille*.

'Doubtless, the United States Army is in more urgent need of trained war fliers than of trained infantrymen, but I am confident that the general American public wishes to see justice done

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and will urge that the Legionnaires get the same opportunity as the aviators to fight under their own flag. Many of the Lafayette airmen began their war careers as Legionnaires, and both in the trenches and in the air the volunteer fighters now in France have done and are doing well their duty against the Huns. Virtually all the men are content to serve until the war's end under the French tricolor, but they feel that they would be of more real use — in view of their long experience in this war — if put with their less war-hardened countrymen.

'Practically every deserter and "quitter" from the Foreign Legion and the French and British Flying Corps, who has returned to America, has, according to United States newspaper reports, met with a great reception and has been hailed as a hero. Some have even been made officers in the United States Army, it is said. No one seems to have thought to inquire how it happened that, being so valorous and of such great service to the Allied armies, these men found it so easy to be permitted to return home.

'This is not intended for muck-raking, but is merely a plea that just attention be paid to a little group of meritorious fighters.'

The First Division of the United States Army was encamped not far behind the Flirey sector, training and preparing to go into the trenches, and the American Legionnaires visited their fellow countrymen whenever the occasion presented itself. On New Year's Day, 1918, Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet gave them three days' leave to go over to the American camp and take the physical examination for the United States Army, and told them it was now only a question of days before they would be transferred from the Legion to their own national service. Bustillos and Philippe were away with a detachment of men building barracks, and Noe had been detached as telephone wire-layer to the Engineers' Corps of the Moroccan Division, so did not take the examination, which was passed successfully by

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their comrades. Christopher Charles wrote that he and his comrades were 'treated right by the boys at the U.S. camp, and once more had a real good old New Year. However,' he continued, 'in the three days that I was there, I can now see that I will regret the Legion quite a bit and that I will not find life all sunshine with my own boys.'

4

The Germans attempted another trench raid against the Legion on January 5, which failed as piteously as that on December 3. The French High Commander had decided since some time that the enemy works in Mortmare Wood and the Renard salient, from which most of the *coups de main* started, must be destroyed. A large-scale raid was planned, and when volunteers were called for, virtually every Legionnaire offered himself.

Aviators photographed the region of the projected attack; the officers and men selected for the operations were given maps showing exactly what point in the German line they must carry, and the affair was carefully rehearsed time after time.

On January 8 the enemy position was subjected to four hours' intense bombardment, the machine-gun nests and battery emplacements spotted by the aviators were knocked to pieces, and at 2.50 P.M. the picked Legionnaires, supported by Algerian *tirailleurs*, left their shelters, crossed No-Man's-Land at a rapid trot, and sprang into the German trenches. The dazed Teutons offered little resistance; they were surprised, as they had not expected an attack because of the cold and deep snow.

In some places the raiders penetrated almost a kilometre into the enemy lines. They completely cleared out the first- and second-line trenches, blew up all the shelters and burned the cabins in the wood, and accomplished damage that it took the Germans over three months to repair. After a visit of two hours,

the attackers retired into their own lines, taking with them one hundred and ten prisoners, including eighteen non-commissioned officers, a number of machine guns and mine-throwers, much ammunition and other supplies.

'This fine example of a trench raid was executed with that mastery which makes of the Legion an incomparable instrument of war without equivalent in any of the armies now operating,' said Colonel Mittelhauser, the Alsatian Commander of the Brigade to which the Legion belonged, in an Order of the Day. The raiders lost but six men killed, and a handful wounded.

Among the latter was Ivan Nock, the only American to go on the raid. Just as he reached the German trenches his right arm was torn off near the shoulder by a shell.

'Don't bother about me. Carry on the raid, and pick me up on the way home,' he told his comrades who halted by his side.

For almost two hours Nock lay bleeding in the snow; then he was carried back to the Legion's field hospital. Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet hastened to the brave boy's side and pinned on his chest the *Médaille Militaire*, and *Médecin-Chef* Azam and the other surgeons did all they could to save him. However, too much of his life blood had ebbed away as he waited for his comrades to finish their work of destruction in the enemy lines, and on the afternoon of January 9 gallant Ivan Nock breathed his last. The entire Legion mourned him as one of the bravest of the brave. A last citation in the Order of the Day paid homage to him as 'an excellent grenadier; grievously wounded January 8, 1918, as he rushed upon the enemy lines under a violent barrage fire. Died as a result of his wounds.'

Nock's *adjudant-chef*, Henri Sapène, an Argentine, wrote:

'I am the first to regret that Nock has been given so colorless a citation. As a soldier, I knew him better than any one else, for at Auberive, at Verdun, and at the trench raid of January 8, he was always under my orders.'

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‘With men such as him, one could accomplish the impossible.

‘As good a comrade as he was a brave soldier, he has left only regrets at the Tenth Company.’

Edgar Boulogny wrote from Macedonia:

‘What a great pity that Nock has met his fate! He never should have participated in that *coup de main*; in a few days he would have transferred to the United States Army and with our boys would have rendered great service, and no doubt would have won a commission in short time.

‘Nock was an exceptionally brave man. At Lassigny in August, 1916, he was in my company and I had a chance to watch him closely. Only two days after his arrival in the trenches we were heavily shelled by the Boches. Nock was occupying a salient *petit poste*, and during the whole of the fireworks display he did not show the least emotion. On the contrary, he seemed to enjoy the sport. Afterwards he was always mixed up in patrols, etc. I always knew him to be resourceful, and no old-timer had any thing on him.’

The Germans were not long in replying to the Legion’s destructive *coup de main*. All the day of January 12 they literally smothered the Legion’s positions with an avalanche of heavy shells, followed by thousands of gas-shells, and provisionally put *hors de combat* the Regimental Headquarters and two companies of Legionnaires. Only one man was killed, however, Second Lieutenant Granacher, a Swiss who volunteered in August, 1914, and had won his rank by bravery in action.

The American Legionnaires did not undergo the frightful bombardment. The day following Nock’s funeral the order finally came liberating them from the French service, and they transferred without delay to the United States Army. They left their honored corps with regret, and Algernon Sartoris voiced the sentiments of his comrades when he said: ‘I shall never see the uniform of the Legion without a thrill of pride and a quickened beating of the heart.’

Chapter XVII

FLYERS

BY THE time the United States entered the war against Germany, the *Lafayette Escadrille* was famous the world over, and its glorious reputation inspired numerous young Americans to come to France and enlist in the French Aviation. In 1914, only one American citizen, Raoul Lufbery, went directly into the French Aviation Service without first serving in the ranks of the Foreign Legion; in 1915, there were eight; in 1916, there were thirty-two; and in 1917, up until August 4, when the French stopped accepting American volunteers for the Air Service, there were one hundred and forty-eight.

As the *Lafayette Escadrille*, like all the French squadrons, was limited to from twelve to fifteen pilots, the later volunteer aviators, after they finished their training at the schools were dispersed among French pursuit, bombardment, and observation *escadrilles* all along the front. All told, only thirty-eight American pilots and four French officers were ever on the rolls of the *Lafayette Escadrille*.

During 1917, the *Lafayette Escadrille* moved up and down the front wherever the fighting was fiercest, and rendered splendid service over the Somme, Oise, Aisne, Flanders, Verdun, and Champagne sectors. In the early spring William Thaw won his fourth citation in Army Orders, which read:

An excellent pilot. Returned to the front after recovery from a grave wound, he does not cease to give an example of courage and spirit. During the German retreat he gave proof of intelligent initiative in landing near the marching elements, to communicate to them

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information he had gathered concerning the enemy by flying at a low altitude and thanks to which surprises were avoided. April 28 he destroyed his second enemy aeroplane.

Frederick Zinn flew with an observation squadron, the F. 24, and was decorated with the *Croix de Guerre* with the following citation:

An American volunteer in the *Deuxième Étranger*, participated in all the operations of that corps from August, 1914, to October, 1915. Painfully wounded and passed into the Aviation as observer, he immediately made himself remarked by his *sang-froid*, his daring, and his contempt of danger. Has furnished since April 10, often without protection, a great number of distant photographic reconnaissances which he has always carried out successfully, in spite of artillery fire and attacks by enemy aeroplanes.

Zinn was promoted sergeant, and in the summer of 1917 won another citation in Army Orders, which again spoke of his work as a photographic observer, and stated that he 'always distinguished himself by his great bravery and his *sang-froid*.'

Chatkoff fell ill from exposure in the trenches with the Legion, and when he left the hospital went to the front as pilot with the C. 11 *Escadrille*. He there won the *Croix de Guerre*, with this citation:

Delivered from May 12 to June 9, 1917, more than ten combats during which he gave proof of great qualities of courage, of skill, and of *sang-froid*. June 4, he attacked successfully, in the course of the same flight, two groups of three and four enemy aeroplanes. Had his aeroplane hit by six bullets and by numerous shell fragments.

Chatkoff's squadron was stationed in the Aisne sector, not far from the aviation field of the Lafayette *Escadrille* at Chaudun, on the plateau above Soissons, from whence the pilot flew on patrols above the Chemin-des-Dames battlefield, where aerial activity was intense during the entire summer of 1917. Chatkoff often flew over to Chaudun and visited the Americans

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there, whenever he had a little freedom from duty over the lines. He came over in his Caudron two-seater on June 15, and, after lunching with the Lafayette pilots, took a young war worker, Benjamin Woodworth, up for a flight.

When he got up to about three hundred feet altitude over the field, Chatkoff started doing 'stunt' flying in his heavy plane, to give his passenger a thrill and show the men on the ground his skill as a pilot. As he looped and twisted and turned his machine in the air, many of the pilots below turned their backs on the scene, saying they could not endure watching the performance.

Suddenly Chatkoff lost control of his machine, and it dipped rapidly towards the ground from a height of less than two hundred feet. The horror-stricken spectators saw Chatkoff struggle wildly to right the aeroplane; his efforts were fruitless, and with full motor on, the machine crashed into the earth and crumpled up like straw.

Woodworth, who had wanted to become an aviator and had been refused permission by his parents, was killed outright, cut in two at the waist, and Chatkoff was picked out of the wreckage more dead than alive. He had serious wounds all over the head and body, and many bones broken. He recovered consciousness for a minute as he was being carried away to the hospital, and made a ghastly attempt to smile. He was trepanned, and his entire body and limbs put into plaster casts. For weeks it was thought that he could not recover, but his life was finally saved, although he stayed in hospitals almost to the end of the war, and was left with his mind permanently impaired.

By the month of August, 1917, the Lafayette *Escadrille* had had nine pilots killed and five wounded; its members had won four Crosses of the *Légion d'Honneur*, seven *Médailles Militaires*, and thirty-one citations in the Order of the Day, each citation accompanied by the *Croix de Guerre*, or an additional

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palm for the ribbon, if the pilot cited had already received the medal. On August 15, the Squadron was cited in Army Orders by Commander-in-Chief Pétain, as follows:

An *escadrille* composed of American volunteers, come to fight for France with the very purest spirit of sacrifice.

It has led without cessation, under the command of Captain Thénault, who formed it, an ardent struggle against our enemies.

In very hard combats and at the price of losses which, far from weakening, have exalted, its morale, it has destroyed twenty-eight adversary aeroplanes.

It has excited the profound admiration of the chiefs who have had it under their orders and of the French *escadrilles* who, fighting by its side, have wished to rival it in valor.

Much outside pressure was brought to bear on the pilots of the Lafayette *Escadrille* and those serving with other French squadrons, to induce them to offer their services to the United States. They were ready and willing to serve their own land, but many of them felt that they owed a certain debt to France, which had spent an average sum of ten thousand dollars per man to train them as flyers, and they had become greatly attached to their French comrades. They were also surprised at the slowness with which an American army was being formed to fight the Germans, and considered that they could best render service to the Allied cause by remaining where they were until the United States Aviation was ready to take its place at the front in France.

After months of reflection and discussion, the pilots of the Lafayette *Escadrille* decided in the fall of 1917 to offer their services as a unit to their own Government. There followed considerable delay and red tape on the part of the American authorities, then the *Escadrille* on February 18, 1918, was taken over by the United States Air Service, of which it became the One Hundred and Third Pursuit Squadron. As there were no other American squadrons ready for service, it remained at the

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front, attached to the French *Groupe de Combat* 15, under the command of William Thaw.

All the Lafayette *Escadrille* pilots received commissions in the United States Air Service. Raoul Lufbery and William Thaw became majors; Robert Soubiran was made a captain, and William Dugan a first lieutenant. By the early summer of 1918, most of them were scattered among the new American squadrons as commanding officers and flight leaders. William Thaw took command of the Third Pursuit Group, destroyed several German aeroplanes and observation balloons, won four more citations in French and American Army Orders, was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross with Bronze Oak Leaf, made an officer of the Legion of Honor, and ended the war a lieutenant-colonel.

Raoul Lufbery was attached to the First Pursuit Group, and was killed in aerial combat near Toul on May 19, 1918. He was America's greatest 'ace' aviator, and had destroyed over forty German aeroplanes; only seventeen of his victories were officially confirmed, as most of his combats took place too far behind the enemy lines for the result to be seen by the French Army observers. Lufbery was decorated with the Cross of the *Légion d'Honneur*, the *Croix de Guerre* with ten palms, the British Military Medal, and other Allied medals.

When Thaw went to the Third Pursuit Group, Robert Soubiran succeeded him as commanding officer of the One Hundred and Third Pursuit Squadron, and eventually was promoted major. Soubiran was decorated with the Cross of the *Légion d'Honneur* and the *Croix de Guerre* with two palms. His first citation read:

An American enlisted since the beginning of the war in the Foreign Legion, where he took part in the combats in the Aisne in 1914 and in the Champagne attacks in 1915. Wounded October 19, 1915. Passed into the Aviation, he showed himself to be an excellent pilot, fulfilling with a remarkable ardor the missions confided to him. Octo-

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ber 17, 1917, while protecting an attack on Drachens, forced an enemy machine to land out of control.

William Dugan remained with the One Hundred and Third Squadron until June 1, 1918, when he was made officer in charge of repairs and testing at the American Acceptance Park at Orly, where he remained on duty until after the Armistice. Dugan had gone to America on leave in 1917, married while there, and brought his bride back to France with him. While on leave in Paris during the summer of 1917, he met by chance his brother, Charles Dugan, whom he had not seen for eight years. Charles Dugan had enlisted in the Canadian Army in 1914, and became a sergeant in an infantry regiment.

After the signing of the Armistice, the following announcement was made in General Order No. 17:

HEADQUARTERS, FIRST PURSUIT WING
AIR SERVICE, A.E.F.
November 16, 1918

General Order

1. The One Hundred and Third Aero Squadron, Third Pursuit Group, will hold itself in readiness to move at any moment to join the First Pursuit Group and proceed into Germany.

2. This honor has been conferred upon the One Hundred and Third Aero Squadron for its long and faithful service with French and American armies.

3. The Wing Commander takes the opportunity of expressing his pleasure at having this Squadron under his command. The Lafayette Escadrille, organized long before the entry of the United States into the European War, played an important part in bringing home to our people the basic issues of the War. To the French people of future generations the names of its organizers and early pilots must mean what the names of Lafayette and Rochambeau mean to us Americans of this generation. To mention only a few, the names of Norman Prince, Kiffin Rockwell, James McConnell, Victor Chapman, Captain James Norman Hall, Major Kenneth Marr, Major David McK. Peterson, Major Raoul Lufbery, and Lieutenant-Colonel William

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Thaw, are never to be forgotten. In February last the Lafayette Escadrille of the French Army was transferred to the One Hundred and Third Aero Squadron, United States Army. It was the first, and for nearly two months it was the only, American Air Service organization on the Front. The Squadron produced two of America's four Pursuit Group Commanders as well as a very large proportion of the squadron and flight commanders. While giving thus generously of its experienced personnel to new units, the standard of merit of this Squadron has never been lowered. No task was too arduous or too hazardous for it to perform successfully. In the recent decisive operations of the First American Army, the One Hundred and Third Aero Squadron has done its share.

¶4. The Wing Commander congratulates Captain Robert Soubiran, Squadron Commander, One Hundred and Third Aero Squadron, and all of his personnel, commissioned and enlisted. No other organization in the American Army has a right to such a high measure of satisfaction in feeling its difficult task has been performed. So long as the personnel bears in mind the record the Squadron has established, there can be no other prospect for it than that of a splendid future.

B. M. ATKINSON

Lt. Col., Air Service, U.S.A., Commanding

Most of the American volunteer pilots flying with French *escadrilles* transferred to their National Army during the spring and summer of 1918, although Frederick Zinn was especially asked for by the American Army authorities in the fall of 1917. His long experience as an aerial photographer and observer made him an exceptionally valuable man, and he was commissioned captain and put in charge of a department of the United States Air Service, where he served at the American G.H.Q. at Chaumont, at the First Air *Dépôt*, Colombey-les-Belles, and elsewhere, until the end of the war. He was promoted major, and after the Armistice went to Berlin as head of the American Mission for locating the graves of American aviators who fell in enemy territory.

Marius Rocle, who had flown for over a year as observer and

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machine-gunner with various French *escadrilles*, was commissioned a second lieutenant, and went, first, to the Thirteenth Aero Squadron and then to the Six Hundred and Forty-Fourth, where he remained until the end of hostilities.

Louis Charton had a very short career as an aviator. He was brevetted as a pilot on May 14, 1917, and went to the front with the *Escadrille* Spad 92 on August 22. Flying over the Verdun sector two weeks later, he was shot down by German anti-aircraft batteries and was made prisoner. His health broke down in the prison camps, and in the summer of 1918 he was interned in Switzerland.

Charton made many efforts to get back to France, and wrote: 'I wish to avenge myself for the miseries I suffered in captivity, and to seek vengeance for the death of my brother. I am bored here, and hate to remain inactive while so many of my comrades are having the honor of hunting the Boches.'

Charton was not released from the internment camp until the end of the war.

Lawrence Scanlan made a valiant effort to become an aviator, but his old wound and shortened leg made his training difficult. He finally got past the ground-training stage, and began making trial flights for his brevet. He then had a unique series of accidents, his aeroplane falling several times from high altitudes, but Scanlan always escaped unscathed.

In July, 1917, Scanlan's aeroplane crashed through the roof of an army bakery at Avord. The soldiers who had been engaged in mixing the bread fled from the building, not knowing what had happened; Scanlan extricated himself from the wreckage and, all covered with flour, followed them out into the open.

The captain commanding the aviation school had seen the accident, and rushed over to the scene. He met Scanlan, mistook him for one of the bakers, and shouted at him:



LAWRENCE SCANLAN'S AEROPLANE
In the bakery at Camp d'Avord



LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE, JULY, 1917
*Left to right: Robert Soubiran, Willis Haviland, Kenneth Marr, William Thaw
 French mechanic, David McK. Peterson*

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'Come into the bakery and help get out the body of the dead pilot there!'

'I am the dead pilot, Captain,' replied Scanlan.

The wounded leg continued to give him trouble, and finally in September, 1917, Scanlan to his great disappointment was forced to renounce aviation and return to America.

One hundred and eighty American pilots in all flew at the front in French uniform. They served with ninety-three different French pursuit, observation, and bombardment squadrons. Fifty-one were killed in action; six were killed in school accidents; and five died of illness. Fifteen were taken prisoners; ninety-three transferred to the United States Air Service and twenty-six to the United States Naval Aviation. Thirty-three remained by their own choice with the French Aviation until the end of the war. The American volunteer pilots were officially credited with the destruction of one hundred and ninety-nine German aeroplanes.

Two of the Americans who volunteered in the Foreign Legion in 1914 were closely connected with the Aviation in 1917-18, without being pilots or observers. John Hopper invented early in 1917 a luminous indicating device for the night landing of aeroplanes, which was widely used by the Allied Aviation forces, and made a number of night flights himself as passenger. Robert Percy left the Legion in the spring of 1917 to become William Thaw's orderly, and remained with Thaw in that capacity until after the Armistice.

2

Paul Pavelka (see Chapter XIV) sailed from Marseille on January 30, 1917, and, after a pleasant voyage broken by a short stop at Malta, arrived at Salonika early in February. His life on the picturesque but difficult Near-Eastern Front can best be told by the following extracts from his own letters:

American Fighters in the Foreign Legion

February 9, 1917

'At last I am again on the job. I am now assigned to the Escadrille N. 391, and find the change quite interesting. I have a Nieuport as on the French front, with the only exception that I can fly it five hours instead of two. This place is far more interesting than the Occidental front. Here where we are stationed one sees nothing but troops passing by: Serbs, French, Russians, Italians, British, and Greek. Now and then a detachment of prisoners files by, consisting of Bulgars or Turks, with an occasional Austrian or a German. The saddest sight of all is to see the Bulgars marching along without any shoes, the frozen ground cutting their feet. For all that, they seem only too glad to be away from the front.

'The Serbs are a hardy lot, and good fighters. They are not disciplined, however, and come and go as they please. A Serbian regiment will pass in the morning, in the form of a group of men, then, for three or four days after, the same regiment is passing by, some in twos, some in fours, and here and there an officer walking along with his hands in his pockets. They go into the line and remain there until almost starved out, for their revictualling service is very poor, with musk-oxen, donkeys, and a few half-starved pack-horses. The men themselves carry as much as any of the mules or pack-horses.

'The best troops here in my estimation are the French. They are the same good old *poilus* we see in France, with the same high spirit, singing and joking in spite of the severe cold, and over-flooded roads on which they have to travel.

'It took me four days to reach the *escadrille*, by tractor, so I had a good experience with the over-flooded Vardar district. We were stalled by the water reaching our magneto. It only took four hours of hard labor and a good wetting to get us out!

'Here at the *escadrille* we are not so badly off. We are quartered in aeroplane cases, which are far better than tents. Our *popote* (mess) is good, and costs only three francs fifty per day.

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'We do many things here with the enemy which would be almost impossible on the Western Front. They seem very poor gunners.

'We have newspapers published at Salonika, which help us with information as to what the outside world is doing. America seems to have taken a final stand, which I hope will help out the Allies.

'You should be here to witness some of the fun that takes place with the Greek population. We accuse them of being Turks, whereupon they protest most indignantly, and say: "*Bon Français, moi Grec Venizelos, Grec Macédoine. Turc pas bon, Bulgare pas bon!*" ["Good Frenchmen, me Venizelos Greek, Macedonian Greek. Turk no good, Bulgar no good."] Then they make signs of shooting all the Turks and Bulgars. A good many Turkish women are to be seen around; they dress in black and when out of doors always wear veils.

'I am awfully glad that I came to the Orient. It is just what I desired, in the line of war. One hundred and eighty kilometres from nowhere, plenty of rough work, and some advancing to keep up the enthusiasm of every one concerned. We see sights here which we never shall forget.'

Pavelka was mentioned in July in the Order of the entire Allied Armies fighting on the Macedonian front, and decorated by the Commander-in-Chief with the *Croix de Guerre*. His citation read:

Paul Pavelka, Sergeant-Pilot with the Army of the Orient; an American citizen who volunteered for the duration of the war; painfully wounded with the Foreign Legion, June 16, 1915; transferred to the Aviation Service, where he became an ardent, brave, and conscientious fighting pilot. Since being with the Army of the Orient, he has given every proof of eagerness to fight and devotion; has had numerous combats, frequently returning with his machine riddled with bullets.

Pavelka wrote on July 30:

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‘It is considered a great thing to have a citation of this nature. All day long I have done nothing but shake hands, and my right hand is almost worn off. Still, I would rather have it so than shot off by a damned Hun.

‘I have two machines now, a 120 H.P. Nieuport, and an A.R. 170 H.P., with a Greek officer as passenger, with whom I expect to make a few long-distance raids. He speaks perfect English, and is a charming sort of a chap. However, he does not know much about handling a machine gun. This I will soon teach him. I expect to make my first raid in a few days.

‘It has been very hot here these past few days. So hot that a good many of our boys are being sent to France, as they are not able to stand the heat. Malaria reigns supreme. We see many men who are “dango” from the heat; some become dangerous, and others quite amusing. Leaves are being accorded, and there are about ten thousand *permissionnaires* on their way to sunny France — or rather shady France, for God knows no one would want more sun than there is here in Macedonia.’

Edgar Bouligny, who had finished his training as an aviator, volunteered for service on the Macedonian front in October, 1917, and a letter, dated November 13, 1917, which he wrote very soon after his arrival at Salonika from France, contained sad news about Pavelka:

‘Paul Pavelka is dead. Day before yesterday, while riding a vicious horse belonging to the British Cavalry, he fell with the brute, and received internal injuries from which he succumbed yesterday.

‘I did not know that poor Pavelka was near Salonika, and it was only this morning that I heard a pilot say that his funeral would take place at nine o’clock at the Zeitenlick Cemetery at Salonika. It was seven o’clock when I heard the terrible news, so I rushed to the Captain of my camp and obtained permission to attend the funeral. The C.O. gave orders that I should have an automobile, so by rushing things I got to the cemetery just



CORPORAL ANDREW WALBRON AND PAUL PAVELKA (*right*)



FUNERAL OF PAUL PAVELKA AT SALONIKA

Flyers

in time. All the aviators of the Salonika sector were there; also a good many officers from the French and British camps.

'The *piquet d'honneur* was furnished by a French infantry regiment, and there was also an armed guard composed of Serbian soldiers. The funeral services were read by a chaplain from the British Army, and in the chapel a French almoner made a talk. He spoke of the brave and valuable services rendered to France by Pavelka, and also added a few words about the great friendship existing between the United States and France.

'In the crowd I noticed the United States Consul. On Pavelka's tomb were beautiful wreaths, sent by the pilots and observers of *Escadrilles* 502 and 507, and another from the mechanics and personnel of *Escadrille* 507.'

Pavelka's death was a striking instance of the irony of Fate. He met by chance an English cavalryman who was formerly his comrade in the Foreign Legion, and visited him at the British camp. The American was once a very good horseman himself, and asked to try out one of a freshly arrived lot of horses. The animal was an unruly one, and when it found Pavelka could not be dismounted, fell with him and rolled over on him.

Pavelka had travelled in many lands and had escaped almost every conceivable form of death on land, on sea, and in the air. He finally met an end, as Harry Esty Dounce wrote in the New York 'Sun,' in a feature story about the chivalrous Connecticut fighter, which might have overtaken him in boyhood on his father's farm.

3

Edgar Bouligny flew on the Near-Orient Front for eight months, and his adventures there were many and varied. On January 8, 1918, he wrote:

'We are having polar weather these days, and it is *some* cold

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up in the sky. This morning a dirty Boche "bird" flew over our heads, and distributed several thousand circulars, on which was printed the following: "*Savez-vous nager?*" ["Do you know how to swim?"] What do you think of the nerve of the Square Heads? I wonder if they think for a minute that they can throw us into the sea. I am positive they are seriously mistaken.

'In spite of the cold weather, I have been doing quite a lot of flying. The work I do is very useful, so I feel that I am earning my *gamelle*. The morale is excellent on this front. All the soldiers appear satisfied, and I hope the same feeling exists on the Western Front.

'I go to Salonika quite often. The city is curious enough, but the population is composed of Greeks and Turks, with a large sprinkling of Israelites. Believe me, they are *some* grafters, all past-masters in the art of separating you from your *mazuma*.'

Bouligny returned to France late in June, 1918. He hesitated for many months before he finally decided to leave the French Army, of which he had been so long and so faithfully a member. Finally, on October 24, 1918, he transferred to the United States Aviation. He had always been too busy at the front, and knew too little of the art of wire-pulling, to further his own interests at the American G.H.Q., and he was given a commission as second lieutenant only, to the great disgust of all who knew his splendid war record and appreciated his modesty and courage.

Chapter XVIII

JACOB AND CAPDEVIELLE

THE One Hundred and Seventieth Regiment remained in the Champagne region throughout the spring of 1917, part of the time in the trenches and part of the time in reserve. Capdevielle returned early in the summer from his leave in America; while there he had met with an enthusiastic reception, and was called upon to speak at West Point and at a number of Army training camps.

The regiment went into the trenches near Reims toward the end of June. Sergeant Jacob and his section of engineers were posted in the city itself, to fight the fires that were lighted there every day by the German bombardment. An interesting picture of conditions in the historic old metropolis of the Champagne country, now for almost three years under enemy shell-fire, was given in one of the Rhode Island veteran's letters, which read:

'The first thing I did when I got into the city was to go around and see the damage done by the daily shelling. Of course, my first visit was to the old cathedral. I had my first glimpse of it from the Quai du Port, and from a distance of about six hundred yards the ancient church looks untouched, but as you come nearer you see the difference.

'The two towers are still there, but the statues and figures sculptured in the stone are all broken. It is a pity. Inside the cathedral it is still worse, because the roof and the top of the transept are gone, and instead of the semi-darkness that we always find in French churches, there is the light of the open sky.

'The walls are still standing, but are full of holes and black-

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ened by fires. The buildings all around the church have suffered much from the bombardment. Some streets are all crumbled down.

'There are still some civilians living in the city, but very few, and the place looks deserted. Grass is growing in the streets through the pavements. A part of the canal is empty of water, with boats and barges lying on the bottom.

'We are in the city itself and every day the Huns fire into it. Seldom do we pass a night without being awakened by the explosion of their shells. To-morrow I am going to see "Cap" and Mulhauser, who is in the trenches near here. Colonel Lavigne-Delville has proposed me as instructor for the U.S. Army; it may help me to pass into it, as he will give me a good reference.'

Mulhauser was sent in July as instructor to a camp of the American Expeditionary Forces in France. Later, he went to the United States with a French Military Mission, and was stationed at Camp Gordon, near Atlanta, Georgia. Capdevielle entered the French officers' school at Saint-Cyr — the West Point of France — in August, and Jacob was left the lone American volunteer in the One Hundred and Seventieth.

The regiment moved, early in October, a little way north to the Chemin-des-Dames sector, which for six months had been one of the most terrible of the entire front. The French had captured on May 4 and 5 about twenty kilometres of the crest along which ran the blood-stained 'Ladies' Road,' but the Germans retained their positions on the eastern slopes, and subjected the French trenches to a formidable bombardment and almost daily attacks in a tireless effort to retake the observation points which dominated the Ailette Valley.

General Maistre, Commander of the French Sixth Army, which held the sector, was determined to end the German menace, and massed troops and artillery for that purpose.

Sergeant Jacob wrote on October 22:

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'We made a splendid *coup de main* a few days ago and are attacking to-morrow, perhaps to-night. You surely will see something in to-morrow's *communiqué* and you will easily guess where your old friend Jacob is.

'I have seen several American officers who I suppose came to see how to prepare and make an attack. I met one young American who was trying to have a glimpse of the battlefield, but of course he could not go very far without being stopped. Luckily, I came along, and showed him the armored trains firing and the gunboats in action on the Aisne River near by.

'Rocle is at an aviation camp near here, and I saw him yesterday. He told me about Dugan getting married while on leave in America.

'I have made an application to be attached to the American Army now in France as interpreter, but the answer does not come very quickly. However, I am going to make another.

'After the attack, it will be *grand repos* for us. We have rain and mud here, but it is mixed with victory.'

At five-fifteen on the morning of October 23, before dawn and in a cold fog, General Maistre's troops attacked along a twelve-kilometres front between Moisy Farm and La Raque. Eighteen hundred cannon — the greatest number yet used along so narrow a front — had drenched the German lines with projectiles for six days and six nights, and the two lines of trenches which constituted the enemy's first position were seized by the attackers at a single bound. Tanks then advanced, and accompanied the infantrymen to the conquest of the second position. Chevignon, Vaudesson, Fort Malmaison, and other essential points were captured; the enemy was outflanked all along that part of the Chemin des Dames not yet in French hands, and Ludendorff withdrew his shattered divisions to the north bank of the Ailette during the night of November 1.

The operation was planned and executed in a model manner. The German losses were great, and those of the French small.

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The French captured 11,157 prisoners, 200 heavy guns, 222 trench-mortars, and much material.

Eugene Jacob came safely through the attack, and went with his regiment for a period of rest at Luxeuil-les-Bains. In December, the One Hundred and Seventieth went into the trenches along a high crest of the Vosges Mountains.

'Once more we see the sad landscapes of No-Man's-Land,' wrote Jacob; 'it is very cold on the top of these mountains. There is a rumor of a strong German attack this winter. They hope to crush us before Uncle Sam gets here with his army, but, instead, we will give them a good thrashing, as we always have done before. Of course, it will be hard to fight in winter with this cold weather, but we can do it as well as we did at Verdun two years ago.'

Sergeant Jacob was liberated from the French Army early in January, 1918. He went at once to Paris; within two days he had enlisted in the United States Army as a private, and was sent to the First Division, where he was put in Headquarters Company of the Eighteenth Infantry.

David King was transferred to the United States Army in December, 1917, and was made a first lieutenant. After he had finished his training as an artilleryman, he had been sent with a sound-ranging section to the Saint-Mihiel sector, and remained there until the order came for him to join his National Army. He was sent to Berne, Switzerland, early in 1918, and put in charge of an office for checking American prisoners, but he also engaged in counter-espionage work as a more exciting sideline.

John A. Cordonnier changed from the One Hundred and Sixty-Third Line Regiment to the United States Army on April 23, 1918, and fought from then on as a 'doughboy.' Walter K. Appleton, Jr., also transferred to the American Expeditionary Forces. He had entered a French Army Aviation training school after he recovered from typhoid fever in 1916,

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but was finally pronounced unfit to become an aviator and sent back to the infantry, where he remained until the United States Army took him over.

2

The Americans who were liberated from the Foreign Legion to join their own army went first to Paris, where they were examined again by the United States military authorities. Jack Casey was rejected for active service in the A.E.F. on account of his age; he was greatly disappointed, and thought at first of reënlisting in the Legion. He finally was put in charge of the art department of an American War organization, where he served until the end of hostilities.

Theodore Haas entered the automobile corps, and drove one of the army trucks. Algernon Sartoris was attached to the same service as a private, despite his hopes of obtaining a commission in the United States Army, and accompanied the drivers to aid in unloading the trucks. He soon broke down under this heavy work, and was discharged from the A.E.F. in the spring of 1918.

Sartoris had lost or had had stolen from him the United States Army equipment which had been issued to him, and was threatened with court-martial when he could not turn it in upon leaving the service. He was told that he must pay the United States Army one hundred dollars for the missing equipment, or else go to prison and work out the sum at the rate of one dollar a day. Sartoris's financial affairs had gone entirely to ruin since his enlistment in the Legion, and he was absolutely penniless. His family in America did not reply to his cables asking for aid, and the situation began to look black for him.

Finally, to avoid the spectacle of a grandson of a former United States President, an ex-officer of the United States Army, and a late soldier of the Foreign Legion serving a sentence in an A.E.F. military prison in France, one of Sartoris's

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friends — a grandson of two Confederate soldiers who fought U. S. Grant from 1861 to 1865 — paid for the lost equipment, and gave Sartoris a further hundred dollars with which to buy civilian clothes.

Sartoris was a gifted writer, and had often contributed to leading American and English magazines. He wrote for the 'Chicago Daily News' a series of articles and character sketches drawn from his experiences in the Legion. In the summer of 1918, he went to the United States, where he again tried without success to get a commission in the Army.

Christopher Charles, Arthur Barry, Nick Karayinis, and Walter Appleton were sent to the Twenty-Third Engineers' headquarters at Chaumont; Barry and Karayinis were made mail-carriers, Appleton a messenger-boy, and Charles was given an office job!

Charles was very indignant at the use made of war-hardened veterans who had had more experience in the firing line than the entire General Staff of the American Expeditionary Forces, and on March 24 he wrote:

'Things are very dull where we are at present, and I think we made a mistake in all going into the same thing. It would have been far better if we had all split up. If I still find things dull within another week, I shall ask to be put where I can hear the whistling of those old shells once more. At times I just long to be there once more, for I do not feel comfortable in a quiet spot like this. It is hard, when no one — French or American — seems to care. If we could only get a bit of credit for our three and a half years of hardships I would be pleased to go back to the game I was made for.'

Charles wrote again on April 16:

'I made a big mistake in joining the Engineering outfit, for I am not a bit of use here. I do a whole lot of nothing from morning until night.

'Appleton seems to be a pretty handy boy around the office,

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so he is perfectly contented. Barry and Nick are both kept busy all day as mail orderlies, and I am the only one with a lot of time on his hands, and I certainly have a weary time of it.

'I am trying in every way to find where my brother is, and as soon as he arrives, I am going back to a machine-gun company with him. You know that is the game I am at home in. When I sit in an office where I know I am of no use and think of the life in the trenches, I get homesick to be back there.

'It is only a man who has been out there that can understand the feeling. I suppose if I tried to tell the boys here, they would only laugh and say that I was "throwing the bull." Believe me, I liked a rest and I got it, but now I am restless, and when the day is over and I go back to the hay pile in the barracks, it is then that I wish for the old excitement once more.'

Charles and Karayinis finally got transferred to the Eighteenth Infantry Regiment, Headquarters Company, where they found their old comrade, Eugene Jacob, again a sergeant. Their regiment formed part of the First Division, the hardest fighting unit in the A.E.F., and with it they participated in all the heaviest battles delivered by the American Army in France.

David E. Wheeler secured his release from the Canadian regiment with which he was serving, and in the spring of 1918 came to the First Division, A.E.F., as surgeon, with the rank of lieutenant. When General Mangin on July 18 launched his Franco-American forces to the assault of the German hosts on the Chaudun plateau, in the attack which ushered in the final Allied triumph, Lieutenant Wheeler accompanied the first wave of Americans, and cared for the wounded with his habitual courage and devotion.

Wheeler chatted with General Frank Parker, who was also following the van of assault, early in the afternoon, then turned to go in one direction while the General went in another. The German artillery was laying a terrible curtain fire, through which the ex-Legionnaire attempted to pass. A heavy shell

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burst near him, and a large splinter tore through his body. Lieutenant Wheeler was hastened to a hospital, where his wife was a nurse, and died in her arms a few hours after he reached there. He was mourned by all who knew him, and especially by his old comrades of the Legion, as one of the finest types of soldier the war disclosed.

When the Americans were held up in the Argonne Forest by the Germans in October, the Eighteenth Regiment was in front of Grandpré. Eugene Jacob and another American soldier were sheltered in a shell-hole on October 3, waiting for troublesome enemy machine-gun nests to be reduced. A huge German shell exploded right on the edge of the hole; Jacob was wounded in the right forearm, and his comrade in the leg. Jacob had been at the front for almost four years, had participated in almost all the great battles of the war, and this was his first wound.

'Fritz nearly got me in the last battle,' he wrote; 'I had a very close call, but the wound is nothing serious, just a "blighty."'

'I am in a hospital at Vittel, which may be an all-right place as a resort, but I do not like it in my present condition. I cannot go out, so it looks more like a jail to me. It is very hard to get a pass to Paris, and it is harder on me than on the others, as I used to take a trip there every three months when I was in the French Army.

'Is it really the end of the war? I cannot believe it!'

Brooke Bonnell came to France early in 1918, and despite his wooden leg drove a motor-truck for an American war organization until months after the Armistice. Joseph Lydon tried to join him, but in a weakened condition fell ill with tuberculosis and had to enter a sanatorium.

Billy Thorin also was taken sick with tuberculosis in New York in the spring of 1918, and was sent to a sanatorium in Arizona by Mr. John Jay Chapman. Thorin fought desperately to get well, and his courage and cheerfulness endeared him to his doctors and nurses. In New York, people had attempted to

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lionize him as a hero of the war, but he had refused to be the centre of attraction at any gathering to which he was invited. He kept the same attitude at the sanatorium, although he followed the events of the war with intense interest. He at last realized that he could not get well, and told his doctors that his only request was that he be given a military funeral, if possible.

Thorin died on September 25, 1918, three years to the day from the beginning of the great Champagne battle in which he was twice wounded. His dying wish was granted, for the Governor of Arizona and the Commandant of a near-by military post sent a regiment of soldiers to carry out the last rites at his grave, in the cemetery near the sanatorium.

3

Ferdinand Capdevielle finished his period of instruction at Saint-Cyr early in 1918, and rejoined the One Hundred and Seventieth Infantry at the front in Lorraine as second lieutenant. It was suggested that he transfer to the United States Army with the rank of captain, but Capdevielle refused. 'I started out in this war as a soldier in the French Army,' he said, 'and I will finish it with the French.'

When the German offensives began in the North in March and April, Capdevielle's division was held in Lorraine by a grave epidemic of grippe, but was hastened to the Champagne country when the Crown Prince's armies on May 27 surprised and wiped out the exhausted British divisions holding the Chemin-des-Dames position, crossed the Aisne, and marched rapidly toward the Marne. On May 30, General Pétain issued his famous Order of the Day: '*Debout, les héros de la Marne!*'— 'Arise, heroes of the Marne'— and the One Hundred and Seventieth was one of the devoted regiments that counter-attacked all along the line of Soissons to Reims, and held the Teutons on the north bank of the historic river.

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The One Hundred and Seventieth Regiment played an important part in the great French counter-offensive that started on July 18, which Under-Lieutenant Capdevielle afterwards described as follows:

‘Marshal Foch’s turning on the enemy on July 18 was almost as great a surprise for us as it was for the Germans,’ he said. ‘My regiment had been facing the Germans along the Marne since early in June. When the fifth German offensive began on July 15, we were in line just north of Château-Thierry. On the night of the 17th, my battalion was relieved and marched back for *repos* a few kilometres behind the trenches.

‘My men were just getting settled for the night’s sleep when orders came at eleven-thirty, to return immediately to the front line. Off we marched in a drenching rainstorm; and we reached the trenches shortly before dawn. Then I knew something unusual was on foot. A hundred yards behind the trenches heavy batteries were taking position, while with thunderclaps drowning the noise they made, field batteries were moving up between the French and the German lines.

‘General Degoutte’s final order came, and just before day broke, we charged the enemy’s positions with a rolling barrage fire from our artillery preceding us. My regiment attacked from Veully-la-Poterie and Croissant Wood, and we quickly carried three small woods where the Germans were installed. The enemy resisted feebly; a few machine-gunners fired, but the majority of the infantrymen fled. Turning and capturing an occasional machine-gun nest encountered in the wheat fields or woods, the *poilus* advanced rapidly.

‘Without doing any serious fighting, we reached and captured Licy-Clignon, and then started to follow the little Clignon Brook. I was leading a section of men, and we left the shelter of the village houses. We had not gone a hundred yards before we met a tremendous stream of machine-gun bullets. We dropped to the ground and crawled back to the village.

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Patrols slipped out, and we located in the woods along the ravine the German blockhouse which was obstructing our passage.

‘The blockhouse was hollowed out of a small but extremely steep hillock, which had been converted into a regular fortress, and from the mouths of four tunnels poured streams of bullets commanding the road along Clignon Brook. A higher hill a little farther along also was powerfully organized with machine-gun pits. These positions held up for several hours the advance of our entire division.

‘Finally, a Corsican of my company, named Fieschi, who was awaiting court-martial for having been absent without leave, crawled forward, climbed the almost perpendicular slope of the blockhouse hillock, and with his rifle killed the gunners of the heavy rapid-firer, so my other *poilus* were able to advance and kill or capture the crews of the remaining machine guns. It is needless to say that Fieschi was not court-martialled, but I cited him in Army Orders and decorated him with the *Croix de Guerre*.

‘Meanwhile, two other resourceful *poilus* made a wide détour, climbed the fortified hill, and bayoneted three German machine-gunners. We started forward, but other Germans, who had hidden in the wheat to ambush us, opened fire. We spotted their positions, and cleaned them out in short order. We then made another rapid advance, and reached the railroad line running from Brécy to Saint-Germain, where we had a big fight with the Germans.

‘A strong patrol from my regiment entered the railroad tunnel, which enabled us to turn the village and enter from the rear. Here again the enemy resisted fiercely — mostly machine-gunners, one man to each light rapid-firer. We killed many Germans and captured seven; also several machine guns. Sixty-six civilians, who had been in the village throughout the German occupation, welcomed us with great emotion.

‘But we hadn’t time to pause. We continued to pursue the

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ever-retreating foe. It was a fine sensation to push the Germans back so rapidly, but as a battle it didn't compare with Verdun or with the Somme in 1916. We kept going ahead until July 25, when, dog-tired, we were relieved.

'My division had advanced twenty-two kilometres and had captured hundreds of prisoners and much important material. Our losses were not heavy. In my company six men were killed and forty were wounded, mostly by machine-gun bullets. It is my conviction that only an abundance of machine guns, skilfully used, saved the Germans from a great and perhaps fatal disaster in the Marne pocket battle.'

After a period of repose, Capdevielle's division moved over to the right wing of the Champagne sector and became part of the Fourth French Army under General Gouraud.

Capdevielle wrote on September 11: 'I am back in the trenches near where the Legion did great work in September, 1915. I am fighting under the great chief who stopped the Germans last July 15. Life is about the same as in ye days of old. The other night I went on patrol, and had a regular picnic butting my way through barbed entanglements. I got in three hours later with several bullet holes through my clothes. Some job to go out on a dark night and have to find your way around with the aid of a compass!'

The Fourth Army attacked the Germans on September 26, and with his men Capdevielle advanced by Souain and the Navarin Farm across exactly the same terrain where he had fought three years previously. The Germans resisted bitterly, and held on to their positions to the last possible moment. Most of their machine-gunners died at their pieces, and the French losses were heavy. Their progress was irresistible, however; the One Hundred and Seventieth stormed the heights around Somme-Py, and continued to advance due north.

Paul Rockwell, who was attached to French Army Grand Headquarters as official war-correspondent for the 'Chicago

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Daily News,' was at General Gouraud's Headquarters at Châlons-sur-Marne early in October, when he noticed two battle-stained officers of the One Hundred and Seventieth Regiment.

'Pardon me,' Rockwell said to the nearest officer, 'can you give me any news of *Sous-Lieutenant* Capdevielle of your regiment?'

The officer addressed looked at Rockwell with a hesitating air, and then asked: 'Are you a relative of Lieutenant Capdevielle?'

'No,' Rockwell replied, 'but a very good friend.'

'I am very sorry to tell you,' said the Frenchman in a tone of heartfelt regret, 'that Capdevielle has just been killed. We had captured Orfeuil on October 3 and were starting on a further attack. Capdevielle, as always, was advancing at the head of his company, and had not got twenty metres from the departure trench when a bullet struck him in the forehead. He was killed instantly without suffering, and as he would have wished, leading an attack. It is a great loss to us. Lieutenant Capdevielle was the last American volunteer left in our regiment and was one of the bravest men and best comrades we have ever known.'

Ferdinand Capdevielle was the last of the American volunteers of 1914 to fall in battle. General Gouraud awarded him posthumously the Cross of the Legion of Honor, with a superb citation in the Order of the Army, which read:

Sous-Lieutenant Ferdinand Capdevielle: a brilliant officer. An American citizen, enlisted voluntarily in the service of France since the beginning of the war. Participated either with the Foreign Legion or the One Hundred and Seventieth Infantry Regiment in all the important battles of the campaign. Always won the admiration of his men and secured the esteem of his chiefs by his military and moral virtues. October 3, 1918, entrusted with leading to the assault the head platoon of his company, he went forward superbly, progressing

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in spite of the extremely violent fire of the enemy *mitrailleuses*, which he immediately attempted to reduce by the manœuvre of his pieces. Fell gloriously, struck by a bullet in the head at the very instant he stood up to lead his men to the assault of the enemy position. Has already been cited.

Chapter XIX

THE LEGION SAVES AMIENS

TURNING over the Flirey sector to an American brigade on January 20, 1918, the Foreign Legion marched back to Pagny-la-Blanche-Côte and Maxey-sur-Vaise, and went into camp for a repose and a period of training for the decisive conflicts every one felt were near at hand. Still with the corps were Alfred Bustillos and Marius Philippe, who were away on a barrack-building *corvée* when the order came for the American Legionnaires to change to the United States Army; Jack Moyet, just back from the hospital, and Jack Noe, who had missed the transfer by being detached to the Moroccan Division's crew of telephone-wire layers. These men made a request to join the other American Legionnaires in the A.E.F., but so much opposition and red tape were made by both the Legion and the United States authorities that they finally gave up their efforts to change flags.

'I am very glad every time I meet the American soldiers,' wrote Noe. 'They really look good, and their spirits seem to me very high. I am very disappointed not to go with them; however, I shall do my duty where I am, being satisfied if my place is supposed to be with the Foreign Legion.'

'Just the same, I belong to the Stars and Stripes, and I am glad to represent the United States in that regiment which has always shown so much gallantry.'

The long-expected German offensive started on March 21. Supported by scores of fresh divisions liberated from the Eastern Front by the treaty with the Bolshevists, the irresistible waves of assault dashed over the Saint-Quentin sector held by

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the British, and Ludendorff hurried his armies forward in an endeavor to cut off from each other the French and British forces. The French High Command hurled toward the danger-point every available division, with orders to mend at all costs the break in the wall that for over three and a half years had extended from the North Sea to the Swiss frontier, and to keep the enemy from occupying the important city of Amiens.

The Legion started north on April 1, and detraining at Granvillers was directed to Conty, where the Legionnaires witnessed the lamentable exodus of thousands of old men, women, and children, who were fleeing for the second time since August, 1914, from the Teutonic invaders.

The Germans were continuing to advance steadily on Amiens, and the Legion made an all-night march from Conty to Cottenchy, where the Legionnaires bivouacked outside the village on the hillside and in Paraclet Wood. Earthworks were constructed, while reconnaissances were carried out, and on April 24, the regiment moved forward into a ravine west of Gentelles Wood as reserve for an English division which was holding the advanced position.

On April 25 came the order to attack on the following day, and during the night the Legionnaires took up their positions for the battle. The movement was carried out with great difficulty, due to the blackness of the night and the lack of knowledge of the terrain. The English advanced line was very irregularly held, and German machine-gunners had slipped through here and there and set up their pieces, with which several of the Legion's assault companies came in contact. The Germans sent up numerous rockets which lit up the entire scene with an unwelcome light, and beat the plateau with gusts of machine-gun bullets and hails of field-gun shells, in vain efforts to hinder the Legion's reserves.

Nevertheless, while the Second Battalion of the Legion, under the orders of Commandant Germann, remained in reserve

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on the plateau extending from Villers-Bretonneux (recaptured the previous day from the Germans by an Australian regiment), by the Lafayette *Escadrille's* old aviation field at Cachy, to a ravine near Chelles, which separated it from the Amiens road, the First Battalion under Commandant de Sampigny and the Third Battalion under Commandant Colin took up their position facing the Hangard Wood. To their left was a London regiment, to the right the Fourth Algerian *Tirailleurs*.

The Legionnaires threw up hasty breastworks, protecting themselves as best they could from the enemy shells of all calibres and the fire from the lines of machine guns installed along the crest between the wood and village of Hangard.

The Allied attack was launched at five-fifteen the morning of April 26 in a dense fog, just as the Germans themselves were preparing to charge forward and endeavor to gain the mastery of the plateau. The struggle was bitter. Ludendorff's plans called for an entry into Amiens on the evening of April 27, and his orders were to let nothing bar the route. The Germans were in force: six picked Prussian, Bavarian, and Hessian divisions against the Moroccan Division and one English division.

The first two companies of Legionnaires to start forward were wiped out before they had progressed seven hundred metres; Captain Meyer was killed and Captain Hageli desperately wounded. A breach was made in the line of combatants; the First and Third Battalions could not remain in liaison, and both flanks were left uncovered as entire companies of English and *tirailleurs* were cut down by machine-gun fire.

Protected by the fog, which caused them to be mistaken for *tirailleurs*, the Germans infiltrated into the Allied lines, and there ensued long-drawn-out hand-to-hand fighting in which grenade and bayonet were freely used.

Part of Captain Sandré's sustaining company gained a foothold in the northern corner of Hangard Wood and covered the right flank of the First Battalion, while Commandant Colin led

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his men, together with elements from the London regiment, to the assault of another part of the wood. Rivalling with each other in valor, the Legionnaires and Englishmen conquered the wood, but, weakened by heavy losses, were driven back by a heavy counter-attack.

Commandant Germann now brought forward the Second Battalion and joined the remnants of the First, which, rallied by Lieutenant Lamare after Commandant de Sampigny fell, still clung tenaciously to the ground it had taken. Liaison was re-established between the Third Battalion and the Fourth *Tirailleurs*, and although the Legionnaires were worn out by their all-day battle in the fog, they were asked to make a new and heavy effort, and to hold on to the position they had won.

The Legionnaires not only held the ground they had already taken, despite a hellish bombardment and repeated enemy counter-attacks, but at a generous cost of blood conquered almost all the rest of the wood, so important for the defense of Amiens. When night fell, the Third Battalion was solidly installed in the wood, while the Second dug itself in along the plateau at the edge.

The First Battalion went into reserve, with its effectives reduced to one officer and one hundred and eighty-seven men. The day had been a terrible one; the Legion had lost eighteen officers and eight hundred and thirty-three men *hors de combat*. In addition to Commandant Colin, five captains and four lieutenants were killed, among them two volunteers of August, 1914 — Lieutenant Effremoff, a Russian, and Lieutenant Guadagnini, an Italian who had remained in the Legion when the *Quatrième Régiment de Marche* was liberated.

Alfred Bustillos was wounded in the foot by a machine-gun bullet early in the battle, and carried off to a field hospital. Marius Philippe was awarded the *Croix de Guerre* because of the ardor and courage he displayed during the grenade fighting in the densest part of Hangard Wood. Jack Moyet won another

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citation in Army Orders; during a lull in the fighting, he advanced into the wood on patrol with a sergeant and two other Legionnaires. Emerging alone from a thick part of the underbrush, he suddenly found himself facing a German lieutenant who was leading a strong patrol. The Teuton officer at once opened fire with an automatic pistol.

'I was very near the Boche and thought my time had come, but he was too nervous and missed me,' related Moyet. 'I fired my rifle point-blank at him, at the same time running my bayonet through his body. He fell dead. Meanwhile, my comrades came running out into the glade and opened fire on the other Boches, several of whom fell, while the others fled.'

The conquered terrain was organized during the night. Under a heavy bombardment and a sweeping fire from machine guns, trenches and *boyaux* were dug, shelters were constructed, and the position rapidly became a defensive sector.

'As we worked, our thoughts went back to another heroic combat delivered by the Legion in the same region, over beyond Villers-Bretonneux which was flaming on the horizon,' wrote S. N. Kurth, a Luxembourg poet volunteer. 'While thinking of our comrades who were still lying between the lines, we remembered also those who fell two years before at Belloy-en-Santerre, there where that splendid American poet, Alan Seeger, had his rendezvous with Death.'

Counter-attacks and curtain fires continued throughout the night, and all during the day of April 27. Machine-gun nests, carefully concealed in an angle of the wood still held by the enemy, especially annoyed the Legionnaires. Four English tanks advanced to reduce them, and a company of Legionnaires commanded by Captain Jovitchevitch, a notable citizen of Cetigne, Montenegro, who during the retreat there aimed the cannon that demolished his own palace, was designated to accompany the tanks and occupy the machine-gun emplacements.

The noise of their motors warned the Germans that the tanks

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were approaching; their position was signalled to the artillery, and an unprecedented bombardment was directed against them. Explosion followed explosion, and flames shooting from the earth made the air hot as a furnace. The bitter odor of powder so saturated the air that many thought a new sort of poisonous gas was being used. The rattle of the machine guns could not be heard in the inferno, which Dante himself could not have described.

Little by little the line was consolidated. The Germans tried out constant partial attacks, in efforts to ascertain the strength and intentions of the men facing them. On the following days and nights they tried in vain to approach the Legion's position, in which all gaps were now stopped. Thinking the French artillery was hidden in the ravines behind the position, the enemy's bombardments were directed mainly to the rear of the trench.

The Legion remained in line until May 6, continually defending and organizing the terrain, but the era of great combats was for the moment terminated, and the front had a tendency to settle itself firmly. The last epic phase of the battle for Amiens was written with a generous flow of the Legion's blood — the blood of men from every country in the world.

The spring sun returned, and with it the turn of the aviators. More than one German aeroplane was shot down over the Legion's trenches. The artillery on both sides continued very active, and the Legionnaires began to wonder if they were again in for a long season of stabilized warfare.

Finally, during the night of May 6 and in the midst of a torrential downpour of rain, the Legion was relieved by the Ninety-Fourth French Infantry. The men picked their way across the water-filled shell-holes and the mud toward the rear and a well-earned rest.

General Debeney, commander of the First French Army, cited the Legion in the Order of the Day, as follows:

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April 26, 1918, under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, animated by an indomitable energy and the very finest spirit of sacrifice, magnificently threw itself forward to the attack of Hangard Wood and of the plateau to the south of Villers-Bretonneux, fulfilling its mission despite the stubborn resistance of the enemy. Then affixed to the conquered terrain, resisting successfully five counter-attacks, maintaining integrally the gains of the day and contributing by its heroism to break the onrush of the enemy.

2

The Foreign Legion camped in the picturesque old forest of Ermenonville and on the sunny plains around Nanteuil-le-Haudouin, and rested from its arduous exploits at Hangard Wood. The men were full of confidence and enthusiasm, despite their fatigue, and felt that the nomination of Marshal Foch as supreme Commander-in-Chief of all the Allied Armies, which had gained for the Franco-British forces victory in the defense of Amiens, would soon bring a complete and final triumph over the Germans. General Pétain, Commander-in-Chief of the French armies, was preparing his reserves so that the further and inevitable onslaughts of the enemy might be checked and a general counter-offense launched at the proper hour; he considered that the Moroccan Division was one of the finest and most trustworthy units in his entire command, one that would always exploit successfully every advantage gained.

When the Germans stormed the Chemin des Dames on May 27, crossed the Aisne and the Vesle and reached the banks of the Marne in a lightning-like onslaught, the Moroccan Division was hastily moved in auto-busses to the *Montagne de Paris*, just west above Soissons, and confided the mission of keeping the enemy from advancing onto the forests of Compiègne and Villers-Cotterets. The Legion went into position beyond the Saconin-Breuil highway, and on the morning of May 30 en-

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gaged in a serious struggle with the Germans, who were moving westward from Soissons *en masse*. A heavy artillery preparation preceded the attack, and the German battalions were accompanied by armored aeroplanes which flew at a low altitude and machine-gunned the Legionnaires. Groups of German grenadiers and machine-gunners, taking advantage of the tall grass, ruined houses, and irregularities in the terrain, infiltrated into the Legion's position and attempted to turn it.

The Legionnaires resisted vigorously. Jack Moyet went with another Legionnaire and a corporal into a village which it was desired that the Germans should consider strongly occupied. The enemy advanced in considerable numbers; with their machine-gun rifles Moyet and his two comrades stood them off, killing and wounding many, until their ammunition was exhausted, whereupon they fell back safely and rejoined their company.

Captain Riboville was surrounded with his company in Vauxbuin village; the Legionnaires cut their way out with the naked bayonet. Commandant Germann, whose battalion occupied the first line of resistance, was killed, but his men held their ground. The efforts of the enemy to break through became more furious in the afternoon, but were every one repulsed. The Legion's supply of cartridges was exhausted, and for a while the situation looked black, but ammunition carts finally arrived and pushed right up into the front line of defense.

The German losses were enormous; among the dead were found soldiers from three different regiments. The onsets stopped after six o'clock in the afternoon, but all through the night the enemy attempted in vain to turn the Legion's position by infiltration on the left flank. Throughout the following day the Legionnaires were subjected to a violent bombardment and machine-gun fire, but they did not yield an inch of terrain. Their losses were severe, and during the night of May 31, the Legion was relieved by a French regiment.

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Jack Moyet was again cited in the Order of the Day. On reconnaissance in the edge of Soissons with Lieutenant Doxat, the latter was shot through the body; Moyet picked him up and under a heavy fire carried him four kilometres to a field dressing-post. Moyet was himself painfully wounded by a bullet later in the fighting, and was carried away to the hospital.

Nevin Hardwick, an American Red Cross automobilist, accompanied Commandant Germann's battalion as volunteer stretcher-bearer, and helped bring in wounded Legionnaires from between the lines. A German officer came upon Hardwick as he was picking up a badly hit man, and summoned him to surrender. The American turned and shot down the Teuton with a revolver. A short while later, Hardwick was wounded by a shell-splinter. Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet awarded him the *Croix de Guerre* for his brave conduct.

For the first five days and nights of June, the Legion marched and fought back and forth across the plateau west of Soissons, stopping gaps wherever they occurred in the French line of defense. June 5 found the Legionnaires holding the sector facing the Saint-Bandry Ravine, from the heights beyond which the Germans dominated their position.

At four o'clock on the morning of June 12, the Germans launched a large-scale push toward the gap between the Compiègne and Villers-Cotterets forests. The front-line machine-guns and riflemen of the Legion stopped short the onslaught of the enemy along their sector, and wiped out numerous small groups that attempted to infiltrate along Ambleny Brook. Supported by artillery fire, the Germans insisted upon trying to pass the Legion's line, but succeeded only in increasing their own losses.

The line regiment to the right of the Legion was driven back toward Laversine later in the morning, however, and the Germans installed themselves in Courtanson Wood and from there threatened the Legion's flank. The company of Legionnaires

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holding Courtanson village was reënforced, and held their ground until two o'clock in the afternoon, when three companies of Algerian *tirailleurs* arrived, and reëstablished the liaison with the French division to the right.

The Germans had not gained a foot of terrain along the Legion's front, which for several hours had stretched out over three kilometres.

Victor Coat, a Legionnaire from Brittany, wrote to Jack Moyet, who was in the hospital: 'We have done good work since you left. The Boches attacked on June 12, and their dead lie strewn before our trenches. Sergeant Stich, Borgeaud, and I were on a volunteer patrol at 6 A.M., June 12. In the woods where the Boches were trying to infiltrate we came across a group of twenty-two "kamerades." Three rifle shots, three Square Heads in the air, one jump, and the nineteen others are ours, with two machine guns. As felicitations we are proposed for the *Médaille Militaire*.'

On June 16, the Legion was relieved by the Eighth Zouaves, and went into camp at Champlieu, in the forest of Compiègne. Reënforcements arrived — the first since the Hangard Wood battle — and the regiment was reconstituted and built up to a strength of twenty-seven hundred men. Among the new arrivals were numerous Frenchmen; not many foreign volunteers were enlisting in the Legion, although a fair number were still coming from Spain and Switzerland. The mobilization and epidemic of grippe in the latter country had kept at home many men who otherwise would have enlisted under the French flag. There was a detachment of two hundred and fifty Russians, men who had come to France in 1916 with the regiments sent by the Czar, and who had remained true to the Allied cause when their comrades mutinied upon receiving news of the Bolshevik Revolution. Many of them had been officers, but, handicapped by not speaking French, they came to the Legion as privates. Other detachments of Russians were put with the Fourth Al-

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gerian *Tirailleurs* and the Eighth Zouaves, which had suffered as severely as the Legion during the battles waged by the Moroccan Division.

The records at French Army Grand Headquarters showed the composition of the Marching Regiment of the Legion in June, 1918, to include three Americans; twenty Argentineans; seven Brazilians; three Canadians; seven Chileans; one Colombian; one Cuban; one Mexican; one Nicaraguan; two Peruvians; four Filipinos; two Uruguayans; two Venezuelans; three hundred and twenty-five Spaniards; one hundred and sixty-six Luxembourgers; one hundred and fifty-nine Italians; five hundred and nineteen Swiss; one hundred and nineteen Greeks; nine hundred and five Frenchmen; one hundred and ten Czechs; seventeen Poles; thirty-nine Armenians; twelve Germans; four Austrians; two Bulgarians; and a certain number of Turks and other Europeans, Asiatics, and Africans.

On July 5, the Legion went back into line near Saint-Pierre-Aigle, in the northernmost corner of Villers-Cotterets Forest. Reconnaissances and *coups de main* were executed continually: there was much grim fighting between small patrols in the thick underbrush of the forest, and the Legion's position was strengthened and bettered day by day.

The Moroccan Division formed part of General Mangin's Tenth Army, which comprised some of the very finest attack units of the entire French forces. Villers-Cotterets Forest began to teem with soldiers representing every branch of the service, and to swarm with activity like an ant-heap. Under the sombre shade of towering trees, whose interlocking branches forbade all observation from enemy aeroplanes, a mighty force was being gathered together, a force mighty in spirit as well as in numbers. War material and supplies needed by the waiting warriors were also accumulating. The vast forest, covering thousands of acres of hills and valleys and situated at a vital point facing the German right flank, was an ideal position from

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which to hurl forth a stupendous surprise attack against the enemy. The latter had made stern efforts in June to occupy this great natural stronghold, but had succeeded only in lopping off some of the outlying spurs of trees, while the French clung tenaciously to the main body of the forest.

From the night of July 13 on, the throng of battalions hidden amongst the trees grew denser. No movement was made by troops anywhere behind this part of the front during the daytime, but under cover of darkness divisions of infantry and cavalry, groups of heavy and field artillery, battalions of tanks and engineers, moved up and concealed themselves at strategic points not far behind the front battle-line. The First and Second American Divisions arrived from the region of Meaux, and went into reserve just behind the Moroccan Division. The Legionnaires knew that something big was afoot, and felt that whatever it was, they had good company all along the line.

The Germans, as had been expected by the French chiefs, attacked with fury along a wide front in Champagne on July 15, were checked almost all along the line, but managed to beat their way across the Marne between Dormans and Jaulgonne, and gained a footing on Reims Mountain and along the wooded plateaus south of the river around Dormans. The Marne pocket was thus deepened, and Marshal Foch telephoned General Pétain to hasten preparations for the flank attack by Mangin's and Degoutte's armies. General Mangin announced to his men: 'The moment has arrived to shake off for all time the mud of the trenches.'

At nightfall of July 17, the formidable flow of troops toward the northern and eastern edges of Villers-Cotterets Forest redoubled in intensity. The French were favored by the breaking of a great storm, the noise of which drowned all sound of the movement of men, horses, tanks, and artillery, and thus enabled them to arrive in the advanced lines without being remarked by the Germans.

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The attack began at dawn on July 18, without any artillery preparation. The infantrymen advanced, accompanied by light and heavy tanks, and preceded by a barrage of shell-fire. Captain de Lannurien's battalion led the onslaught of the Legionnaires, and swept everything before it. Germans were captured while rubbing the sleep out of their eyes; others were taken as they went out with scythes to harvest the wheat French peasants had left standing in their fields when they fled from the Teutons in the spring.

The two other battalions, led by Commandants Marseille and Jacquesson, fought their way out of the edge of the forest they had been holding, and turning toward the south drove the enemy from his works near Chaudun. Around La Glaux Farm the Germans put up a stiff resistance with machine guns, field pieces, and anti-tank cannon. Three tanks were destroyed, but the Legionnaires stormed the trenches and killed all the gunners at their pieces.

The advance continued throughout the afternoon, the night, and the day of the 19th; the Legionnaires by now fighting alongside 'doughboys' from the First and Second American Divisions, Zouaves and Colonial riflemen. Commandant Marseille fell wounded, and was replaced by Commandant de Sampigny, just returned from the hospital.

The Second Brigade had been held up in front of the Chazelle-Lechelle Ravine since noon of the 19th, and the First and Second Battalions of the Legion were ordered to march toward Buzancy and turn the ravine. This movement took place during the night, and at two o'clock on the morning of the 20th, the ravine was captured and its defenders slaughtered. Aconin village and Gérard Wood were captured in a sharp fight, and numerous prisoners made. The advance progressed, and by nine o'clock two companies of Legionnaires reached the Soissons-Château-Thierry highroad.

Ludendorff halted all efforts to progress south of the Marne,

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ordered a withdrawal to the north bank of the river, and threw every available reserve into the new battle Marshal Foch had forced upon him. Battalions of these fresh troops attacked the Legion at ten o'clock on the morning of the 20th, but failed to drive the Legionnaires back. Other counter-attacks were attempted at noon and at four in the afternoon; the battalions of Jacquesson and de Lannurien suffered enormous losses, but held their ground, and killed such numbers of the enemy that the Germans realized the uselessness of tackling the Legion and stopped attempting to break through its line. During the fighting, Commandant de Sampigny, whose battalion was in reserve, was killed. He was one of the few officers left in the Legion from 1914, had participated in all the battles of the regiment, and had been three times wounded.

The fighting slowed down toward dark; the French troops were exhausted by their rapid advance, and took a breathing spell, while the Germans thought only of getting safely out of the pocket they had failed to widen and which had almost proved a death-trap. General Pétain sent fresh divisions to reinforce the Armies of Mangin and Degoutte, and during the night of the 20th, the Legion was relieved. It had furnished three days and nights of continuous fighting, without a wink of sleep, and this after ten days of watchfulness and hard work in the trenches. Its losses had been great: seven hundred and eighty men *hors de combat*, and the survivors had need of hot food, repose, and slumber.

General Daugan, Commander of the Moroccan Division, resumed the work accomplished by his troops in the following General Order:

The Moroccan Division has just participated in one of the most brilliant offensives launched against the enemy and has added new laurels to those, already so numerous, gathered since four years on the French front.

Departing from a terrain difficult, wooded, full of ravines, ener-

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getically defended, covered with *mitrailleuses*; having almost two kilometres to cover in the forest of Villers-Cotterets, before getting out upon the open plateau; Zouaves, Legionnaires, Algerian, Senegalese, and Malagasy *tirailleurs*, in a formidable dash, supported by an active artillery and numerous assault chariots(tanks), have bowled over the enemy, gained some eleven kilometres in depth, cut the highway from Soissons to Chateau-Thierry, made over fifteen hundred prisoners, captured fifty cannon with munitions and machine guns in considerable number, leaving the terrain covered with German *cadavres*.

General Mangin cited the Legion in the Order of the Day:

A magnificent regiment, which, under the orders of its chief, Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, during the difficult period from May 28 to July 20, 1918, has heightened its reputation by its valiance, its energy, and its tenacity. May 30 and 31, stopped short the enemy onrush and maintained integrally its positions (on the *Montagne de Paris*). June 12, with extremely reduced effectives, succeeded in breaking an attack made by an enemy vastly superior in number and caused the enemy considerable losses (at Ambleny and Saint-Bandry). July 18, stormed, with a marvellous enthusiasm, a succession of powerfully fortified positions (on Dommiers Plateau). Thus attained at a single bound its objective situated nearly four kilometres from the first lines, capturing over four hundred and fifty prisoners, twenty cannon, and a considerable number of machine guns and mine-throwers. During the night of July 19 to 20, put to use yet another time its incomparable manœuvring qualities in turning from the north a ravine (Chazelle-Lechelle), where the enemy had accumulated numerous defenses, causing to fall all the resistance points and realizing thus an advance of almost eleven kilometres. Maintained itself with energy upon the conquered position despite the violent enemy counter-attacks.

Chapter XX

VICTORY

THE Legion went into camp first at Hardivillers, then at Camprémy, where it had already been in January, 1916. Its ranks were again reënforced with Russians and Frenchmen, together with veterans of the regiment who had been in hospital with wounds. There was intensive drilling and training in the new kind of warfare in the open that had come into being. Monsieur Clemenceau, Premier and Minister of War, visited the corps on August 20, and complimented it on its glorious reputation.

On August 27, the Legion was transported in motor-trucks to Banru Ravine, and from there marched to Nouvron-Vingré, whence, during the night of the 28th, it went into position farther north of the Aisne behind an American division, which attacked the following morning toward TERNY-SORNY.

The Americans — regiments from the Middle West but lately arrived in France — were badly cut up, and held in check by the Germans before Juvigny. The Legion took over the line on September 1, attacked at two o'clock on the afternoon of September 2, and rapidly drove back the enemy across the open waste east of Beaumont. The Soissons-Béthune highway was reached, but there the Legionnaires were enfiladed by machine guns to the right, where the Germans still held a wood, which the troops attacking alongside the Legion had failed to capture.

Captain de Lannurien, commander of the battalion leading the attack, led his men on across the road, and at a heavy cost took the summit of the plateau east of Sorny. German ma-

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chine guns concealed in sunken roadbeds opened fire; Captain de Lannurien was killed and his men were obliged to dig themselves in, with Captain Sanchez-Carrero now their leader. Commandant Jacquesson's battalion following closely behind was also forced to take cover, while Commandant Maire's reserve battalion advanced to a waiting position.

The situation was troublesome; to the right a battalion of Russians and Malagasies had taken Terny village, but found themselves blocked there. The German *mitrailleuses* and mine-throwers redoubled in activity, and prepared a counter-attack, which was easily repulsed by Jacquesson's Legionnaires. The Fifty-Ninth Infantry Division advanced to the right of the Legion, and the position was organized and maintained all along the line.

From September 3 on, the battle did not cease for an instant. General Mangin intended to smash the Hindenburg Line and occupy the Coucy and Saint-Gobain Forests, and the German Supreme Command consented to every sacrifice that the great bastion of the Hindenburg position might be held. The French advance was slow and painful, and every step forward was bought with blood. General Mangin literally hurled his men against the enemy's positions; to every report of regimental commanders that their troops were exhausted and could not go farther, he simply replied that they *must* continue onward.

The French fought their way forward, and in the front line of progression was the Legion. On September 4, Commandant Maire's battalion captured Sorny village; Neuville-sur-Margival was stormed on the 5th, and during the night the long railway tunnel toward Vauxaillon was reached. The struggle for the commanding Laffaux Plateau began; the Germans were installed there in deep defensive works, with innumerable block-houses and machine-gun nests, which had to be reduced one by one with bayonet, grenade, and trench-dagger. In broad day-

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light Maire's battalion captured by infiltration Sorny Ravine and the powerful fortifications in its banks, but were held there by machine-gun fire from commanding positions.

Charging through the early morning mists on September 14, the Third Battalion of Legionnaires by a supreme call on their energies swept away the opposing machine-gun nests, and hammered their way through the last resistance points of the Hindenburg Line. So impetuous was their onslaught that they arrived at the shelters of the reserve line before the Germans there knew of the attack. Double their own number of prisoners were captured, including the entire staff of the Kronprinz Wilhelm Regiment.

Captain Sanchez-Carrero's battalion conquered an hour later the heights and the village of Allemant, while Jacquesson established his men at Piquet and assured the flanks against all counter-attack.

The Germans brought up all the reserves they could find in the sector, and after an intense artillery preparation made a determined attempt to wrest from the Legion its gains. The Legionnaires by a brilliant counter-charge drove them back in disorder, and retained intact the conquered terrain. The German losses were so terrible that the night and following day were comparatively calm. During the night of September 15, the Legion was relieved by fresh troops, who continued the drive forward.

Never before in all its history had the Legion been called upon for such a prolonged and heavy effort. With no rest, with its food supply service almost non-existent, faced by a desperate and determined foe armed with every known weapon of defense and offense, it had fought its way across one of the most difficult terrains ever utilized in warfare, and smashed the proudest and strongest position of the German armies. It had paid a heavy toll for its success; almost half its effective had fallen. Ten officers were killed, one of them the Venezuelan,

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Captain Sanchez-Carrero, who was shot through the head by a bullet fired from a German aeroplane whose pilot flew low over the Legionnaires and machine-gunned them during the very final hour of the battle. Carrero was once a lieutenant-colonel on the staff of President Castro, and enlisted in the Legion as a lieutenant in August, 1914. He had been wounded several times, and had recently rejoined the Legion after three months' convalescence leave of absence spent in Venezuela. Lieutenant de Montgomery, a Belgian volunteer of 1914, was another of the dead.

Alfred Gerl Bustillos was gassed and badly burned about the face by a flame-thrower during the struggle for Laffaux Plateau, and was cited in the Order of the Day for the third time. Marius Philippe, who had distinguished himself in every 1918 battle of the Legion, won his fourth citation in Army Orders, and Jack Moyet was promoted corporal. Several of the men in the squad placed under his orders were former Russian officers, one of them a colonel. The acts of heroism performed by Legionnaires were almost countless, and many decorations were awarded the men.

General Mangin cited the Legion in the Order of the Day as follows:

An *élite* regiment, which, in the course of the operations from August 27 to September 16, 1918, under the command of its remarkable chief, Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, has affirmed yet another time its high military qualities. September 2, despising the cross-fire of the *mitrailleuses* which cut down its waves of assault, it progressed to its objective, which it reached and organized; it maintained itself there, repulsing powerful counter-attacks. From the 3d to 13th September, by incessant combats, day and night, in an atmosphere saturated with gas, under violent bombardments and storms of machine-gun fire, foot by foot, with the grenade, it pushed its lines in advance by an effort of an heroic constancy. September 14, with an admirable impetuosity, after twelve days of very hard struggle, it captured one of

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the salients reputed impregnable of the Hindenburg Line; gathering there more than five hundred prisoners, cannon, and a great quantity of material.

2

The weary remnants of the Legion, almost dazed by the realization that they had escaped alive from the long days and nights of hellish fighting, slowly made their way back behind the battle zone, and rested, first at Rosières-aux-Salines, then at Saulxures-lès-Nancy, in Lorraine. Volunteers were asked for in all the French regiments, as had already been done several times, to serve in the Legion, and its three battalions were re-constituted to the strength of about five hundred men each.

As a further recognition of the Legion's valor, Marshal Pétain created for it a double *fourragère*, in the colors of the *Légion d'Honneur* and the *Croix de Guerre*.

On October 29, the regiment went into the trenches around Champenoux. The lines were exactly the same as they had been in 1914, and the sector was calm. But the Legion and the Moroccan Division were not there for nothing: General de Castelnau was preparing a gigantic offensive in Lorraine, which was to capture the mighty stronghold of Metz, sweep north, and, taking from behind the German forces in Belgium, cut them off from the Rhine, thereby inflicting a defeat so crushing that the military strength of Germany would be broken for a century to come. To obtain this victory without precedent in history, thirty-one choice French divisions and a host of American units were being massed in Lorraine, with a profusion of munitions and material never before seen.

The Legionnaires prepared to celebrate the third birthday of the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère* on November 11, 1918, by a large-scale *coup de main* on the enemy position in the early hours of the morning. At the last moment, the orders were countermanded. The Germans had thrown up their hands

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and pleaded for mercy, an armistice was signed, and the war was at an end.

There was no rejoicing among the men in the trenches. It was difficult to believe that one could go out into the open without risk of being shot down, and the absence of sound of rifle and cannon along the front was strange; such a quiet, after so many years of din, seemed abnormal. Those who grasped the situation regretted that the fighting could not have continued for a short time longer, so as to thrash the foe beyond all possibility of discussion, and thereby end the war for at least some decades to come.

The Legionnaires camped on their position, and awaited with impatience the moment to cross No Man's Land and enter reconquered Lorraine on their march to the Rhine. Because of the prodigies of heroism it had performed and the marvellous victories it had won, the Moroccan Division was accorded the envied honor of being the first in its sector to cross the old German lines and start the triumphant Allied march forward. Of this epic event Paul Rockwell wrote from French Army Grand Headquarters on November 17:

'The Moroccan Division, which won more honors upon hard-fought battlefields than any other corps engaged in the World War now so triumphantly ended, had the signal distinction of being the first Allied division to march across the late frontier and enter liberated Lorraine. Its first halt was at Château-Salins. There a wonderfully enthusiastic reception was given the troops by the population, which, although oppressed by the Prussian conquerors throughout forty-eight years, had remained French in heart and sympathy.

'With General Daugan and his soldiers I entered Château-Salins, and never before have I witnessed such an impressive, heart-stirring scene as the joy displayed by the Lorrainers at the arrival of their liberators. The Legionnaires, Zouaves, and North African *tirailleurs* composing the Moroccan Division had

American Fighters in the Foreign Legion

been in line in the sector near the Lorraine frontier some days before the Armistice was signed. They remained in the trenches and the destroyed villages while the Germans were preparing for their departure beyond the Rhine. The last important detachments of German troops quitted Lorraine on Friday and Saturday, and then the French prepared to enter.

‘Every man of the Moroccan Division cleaned up his uniform and equipment as if for a grand review, and no corps ever presented a finer aspect than General Daugan’s warriors when they swung into line across the hills toward Château-Salins at dawn on Sunday. Army engineers had repaired the blown-up roads and the destroyed bridges throughout the whole combat zone, so that the long columns of soldiers marched vigorously to the end, their progress uninterrupted by the dense mazes of barbed-wire entanglements, deep trenches and *boyaux*, where the Germans so recently had opposed them.

‘The route wound up and down the hills past numerous battery emplacements and concrete blockhouses, the reduction of which and their capture by assault would have cost thousands of lives. Leaving behind the shell-pocked battle zone and the shapeless masses of bricks and stone that once had been villages, the victorious troops traversed a fertile region abounding in cultivated vineyards and hop fields. Then from the top of a hill, Château-Salins was sighted, and at the same moment a number of youths mounted on bicycles, who had ridden out from the town, appeared wearing tri-color cockades and shouting, “*Vive la France!*”

‘Arab scouts, riding fleet horses and looking most picturesque in their Colonial costumes, with flowing capes, first entered Château-Salins, explored the streets, and thoroughly searched for German stragglers. They found and took in charge four German officers, stalwart-appearing youths, who, it developed, had stayed behind formally to surrender to the French the German cannon and stores remaining in the region. Then



LOUIS HAEFFLE GETS A HAIR-CUT IN THE TRENCHES



THOUSANDS OF BAYONETS FLASHING IN THE SUNLIGHT

A review of the entire Moroccan Division

Victory

General Daugan and his staff, followed by a large troop of Arab Spahis, all on horseback, appeared and rode to the town square and drew up around the divisional pennant.

‘By this time the entire population was in the streets. From every window French flags, most of them home-made, of paper, silk, old skirts, and any material available, waved in the breeze. A French army automobile arrived, from which officers distributed hundreds of Allied flags and tri-colored ornaments to the swarms of eager children. Many of the girls and women were dressed in the quaint old Lorraine costume and added a pleasing note to the scene. Many people were weeping from joy and telling how they had suffered under German dominion and how happy they were once again to become French. Now came the sound of bugles and soon the Eighth Zouave Regiment, headed by its band, arrived.

‘The band halted opposite General Daugan and his staff and played while company after company of Zouaves marched past. The enthusiasm of the Lorrainers was unbounded and cheer after cheer greeted the soldiers. The Zouaves were some time in marching past, and then came the divisional artillery, engineers, and other services.

‘A little while later the Foreign Legion came across the hill and entered Château-Salins. Colonel Rollet, his breast covered with medals and his sword drawn, rode at the head of his Legionnaires. Behind him came the Legion’s band and the Legion’s battle-flag, which was decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honor and the War Cross with nine palms and three stars, representing twelve citations in the Order of the Day — more citations than had ever been won before by any fighting corps. On arriving where General Daugan and his staff were on horseback, Colonel Rollet dismounted, and, taking the Legion’s flag, held it while the Legionnaires filed past. The spectators crowded near as the volunteer fighters of every race, creed, and social condition, representing five-score countries,

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and whose exploits are renowned throughout the world, went by. Far in the background a group of sleek-looking individuals, German officers and officials who had stopped on their way to Nancy to surrender the railways of Alsace-Lorraine, regarded the Legionnaires with angry glares. It was one of Fate's fitting ironies that the high representatives of the nation that so hates the Legion should see that corps at its hour of greatest triumph.

'The be-medalled Legionnaires marched by proudly erect, with that look in the eye which only comes with the consciousness of duty well performed. In the ranks were perhaps fifty survivors from 1914, among them the Persian prince, Karaman Khan Nazare-Aga, a volunteer private at the outbreak of the war, and now a captain and the "ace" of the regiment, wearing the rosette of an Officer of the Legion of Honor and the War Cross with ten citations. Corporal Jack Moyet passed, looking very boyish at the head of his squad of grizzled veterans. And more and more nameless heroes, one after the other.

'When the last company of Legionnaires had passed, General Daugan approached and kissed the Legion's flag. Immediately Colonel Rollet was surrounded by a throng of women and children and men, who embraced the banner with reverence and affection. The Legion's band began playing *La Marseillaise* and the refrain was taken up by a group of old men, some of them veterans of the War of 1870. It was an emotional hour, and the gladness of the Lorrainers was so plainly genuine that every spectator felt a lump in his throat and no one remained dry-eyed.'

3

The Legion continued its triumphant march through Lorraine, and on December 1 entered the Palatinate. Passing by Zweibrücken, Kaiserslautern, and other cities, it arrived on December 8 at Frankenthal, and went into cantonment there

Victory

and in the environs. It kept an eye on the movements of the remnants of the late German Army in Ludwigshafen and Mannheim, and in its turn mounted *die Wacht am Rhein*. The corps, so long and so often reviled by the Germans, was at last, by a return of immanent justice, installed in the very heart of German territory.

The flag of the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère* was decorated with the *Médaille Militaire* with a supreme citation:

An heroic regiment, which its love for France and its legendary bravery have placed in the first rank.

In the course of the epic period of 1918 and under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Rollet, after having broken, at Hangard-en-Santerre Wood, April 26, the German march upon Amiens; after having, from the 28th to the 31st of May, preserved against the furious assaults of the enemy its positions along the *Montagne de Paris*, to the west of Soissons; after having brought to naught, on June 12, the efforts of an entire German division around Ambleny and Saint-Bandry; took up again its offensive traditions on July 18, bowled over the enemy along a depth of eleven kilometres, to the east of the forest of Villers-Cotterets.

And finally, from September 2 to 14, after twelve days of epic struggle, it broke the Hindenburg Line, upon the Laffaux Plateau, capturing an entire regiment.

Was preparing fresh victories in Lorraine when sounded the hour of the Armistice.

The volunteers for the duration of the war, by now reduced in number to six hundred and fifty, were liberated in February, 1919, and in March the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère* left the Army of the Rhine and went to North Africa. The eight hundred men who had enrolled for five years' service in the Legion became the nucleus around which was formed the Third Foreign Regiment, with its *dépôt* at Fez. The *Troisième Étrangère* inherited the glorious battle-flag and the double *fourragère* of the *Régiment de Marche*, along with the traditions,

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and worthily upheld them during the fighting in the Rif, the *Tâche de Taza*, and other campaigns in Morocco.

The official records of the French War Office show that forty-four thousand one hundred and fifty officers and men served in the Foreign Legion in France during the World War. They are listed as coming from exactly one hundred countries, ranging from Abyssinia to Venezuela, from such tiny specks in the ocean as Saint Lucy on up to the mighty island continent Australia. Some lands, such as Panama and Paraguay, Hong-kong and Gibraltar, sent one volunteer; Spain, Greece, Switzerland, Russia, Belgium contributed thousands each, while Italy led with six thousand four hundred and sixty-three volunteer Legionnaires.

The total number of Legionnaires killed and wounded was less than eleven thousand, with almost none taken prisoner. In comparison with the number of effectives engaged, the casualties of the Legion were less than those of many of the French line regiments, some of which lost thirty or forty thousand men in the course of the campaign. These comparatively light losses were due to the high quality of the officers commanding the Legion, and to the valuable experience already gained in Colonial campaigns by the veteran Legionnaires and *gradés* who leavened the mass of volunteers for the war's duration.

Gerald Campbell, the distinguished English war-correspondent attached to French Army Grand Headquarters, who often saw the Legion at the task, called the corps a 'Legion of Idealists.'

'They are a new type of conscientious objectors,' he wrote. 'Their conscience objects to the terms of slavery that Germany wishes to impose on the rest of the world.'

Campbell was right. The glory of the *Régiment de Marche de la Légion Étrangère* was won because the corps was made up of men who wanted to fight and who believed in the cause for which they fought.

Chapter XXI

AFTER THE WAR

JAMES BACH and Frank Musgrave returned from captivity in Germany a few weeks after the Armistice. Bach was decorated with the *Médaille Militaire* and the *Croix de Guerre*, his citation reading:

Of American nationality, he enlisted in the Foreign Legion and accomplished valiantly his duty as an infantryman. Passed into the Aviation, he became in very little time an excellent military pilot, giving proof of intelligence, of courage, of *sang-froid*, and of skill. September 23, 1915, he solicited the honor of being designated for a perilous mission. He fulfilled it, and was made prisoner for having wished to save his comrade.

Musgrave went back to America, with his health badly impaired, while Bach remained in Paris, where he was for a time an American Vice-Consul. Later, he became representative in France of an important American firm of automobile manufacturers.

A decree of October 1, 1918, had made it possible to bestow posthumously the Legion of Honor and the *Médaille Militaire* upon officers and men killed in battle, when cited by their chiefs. The Legion of Honor was awarded to Kiffin Yates Rockwell, and the *Médaille Militaire* to Edward Mandell Stone, Henry Weston Farnsworth, Kenneth Weeks, John Charton, Russell Kelly, Victor Chapman, Nelson Larsen, Alan Seeger, Elov Nilson, Guy Agostini, Harmon Hall, Frank Whitmore, Jack Janz, and other fallen Legionnaires.

Christopher Charles and Eugene Jacob spent several months

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in Germany as members of the American Army of Occupation. Charles was demobilized in Europe, and worked for three years in a machine shop in Paris, before returning to America, where he took a prosaic job as street-car conductor in Brooklyn. Jacob went back to Woonsocket, Rhode Island, but found that his business there had been captured by the stay-at-homes. His health became poor, and he removed to Mendon, Massachusetts, and started a poultry farm.

O. L. McLellan returned to New Orleans, and there was decorated with the Legion of Honor by the French Consul-General.

Lawrence Scanlan died from his old 1915 wounds on November 25, 1921. He had thought his injuries were entirely healed, and was operating a wholesale slaughter-house in New York, when suddenly the wounds became painful and opened up. He was rushed to the hospital and the leg was amputated; in an effort to save his life eight operations were performed in a single month, the leg being cut away higher up each time, but Scanlan was too weakened to resist death longer.

William E. Dugan died in September, 1922, in the hospital at Patchogue, Long Island, his birthplace, following an operation for septicæmia contracted in South American jungles. He had returned to Central and South America after the World War as explorer and resident manager for the United Fruit Company, and his wife and child died of tropical fever in Costa Rica. Dugan gained considerable attention several weeks before his death, when he refuted the claim of the explorer Marsh that he had discovered a race of white Indians in the Panama jungles. Dugan stated that he had crossed time and again the jungles where Professor Marsh had been, and contradicted the latter's claim that no white man from a civilized country had ever penetrated that region.

Algernon Sartoris died at Saint-Nazaire, France, where he had been living in retirement for some years, in January, 1928,

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and Oscar Mouvet, who after the war managed night clubs in Paris, died in January, 1930, of tuberculosis, in the Pyrenees.

Jack Casey died on April 25, 1930, of pneumonia and heart failure, in New York. He had found Montparnasse spoiled after the war, and sought inspiration for his painting in Cuba and Spain, before deciding to locate in New York, where he won success as an illustrator. He was born on May 4, 1878, in San Francisco.

Charles Sweeny acted as war-correspondent for a New York newspaper during the Greco-Turkish War in 1922; he and Paul Rockwell served with the French Aviation in Morocco during the 1925 campaign against Abd el Krim and the Riffian tribes.

Of all the American Legionnaires, Edgar Bouligny perhaps led the most interesting life after the end of the war. He was demobilized in America, but after a visit to New Orleans, where he was accorded a triumphant reception, he returned to Paris and worked for a time as a photographer. Then he went to America, and drove a covered wagon, drawn by a pair of mules, across the continent from New Orleans to Long Beach, California, taking photographs along the way. He then bought an old Ford automobile for forty dollars, drove it across the northern part of the United States, without spending a cent for repairs, to Jersey City, where he sold it to a Jew for thirty-five dollars.

Bouligny next returned to France, but, finding conditions greatly changed there, embarked on a slow freight vessel at Marseille and worked his way around the Mediterranean and part of Africa. Going back to America, he visited in automobiles the most picturesque parts of the United States, Canada, and Mexico, and sent photographs to numerous travel and geographical publications. His numerous wounds and privations suffered during the war made an outdoor life necessary for his health.

American Fighters in the Foreign Legion

Almost all the American volunteer fighters slipped back into civilian life with comparative ease:

Allen Blount became a poultry farmer near Paris; Brooke Bonnell went back to his stock-broker's office in Wall Street. John Bowe occupied himself with veterans' welfare work and politics in Minnesota, and was one of the leaders in the defeat for reelection of Congressman Volstead. Charles Beaumont, who after leaving the Legion became a French citizen and rejoined the French Army, winning the Legion of Honor, the *Croix de Guerre* with several citations, and the rank of captain, as a member of the counter-spy service in Macedonia, ran a ladies' silk underwear factory in Paris, exporting his goods mostly to the United States. Stewart Carstairs painted pictures in Japan and other exotic lands. George Delpeuch remained in Paris, first attached to a large tourist agency, and later in the automobile business. Herman Chatkoff went back to his family in 1919, but they were obliged to place him in an insane asylum. The American Legion took an interest in his case, and he was put in the United States Veterans' Bureau Hospital, at Perryville, Maryland. When he was discharged from that institution, the American Legion still took care of him, and finally got a bill through Congress, granting Chatkoff a special pension from the United States Government. John Hopper reopened his office in Paris as a mining and consulting engineer, and exploited coal mines and brick factories in France. He suffered periodically from his injured spine, and more than once feared that he would become a permanent invalid. David King located in Paris as a writer. Nick Karayinis went back to New York and operated a restaurant there. Fred Landreaux returned to the stage, and acted with provincial stock companies as often as his health permitted. He later became a travelling salesman for a French manufacturing concern. Arthur C. Watson, after working in the Old Dartmouth Museum at New Bedford for several years, be-

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came a professor of English at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Robert Percy got a job as delivery-man for a Paris dressmaker, and Tony Paullet became valet to a New York millionaire. Alvan Sanborn bought a home in a Paris suburb, and resumed his old work as writer and newspaper correspondent. Bob Scanlon was unfitted for the boxing ring by his wounded hand, but was often seen in sporting circles around Paris, until he was shot and badly injured by a jealous woman. Robert Soubiran returned to America for several years, then came to Paris as manager of the French branch of a big American electrical corporation. William Thaw settled in Pittsburgh, and was active in aeronautical affairs in the United States. Henry Walker became a taxicab driver in Paris.

Fred Zinn went home to Battle Creek, Michigan, and entered the business world as a manufacturer of dairy and poultry feeds; he finally had a market for his products as far afield as Panama and Porto Rico, Honduras and Venezuela. Like many of his comrades in the Legion, he has not been back to France since the World War ended for him, and he might have been voicing their ideas when he wrote, in a letter dated January 23, 1929:

‘When I come to analyze the apparent lack of desire to get to France, I think it is more than anything else due to a desire to keep my illusions as long as I can. Barring those first few months, which we all admit were a trifle rough, it was on the whole a very pleasant war for those of us who had enough change of work to keep it interesting. I cannot help but feel that going back now would have the effect of effacing a lot of those early and rather pleasant memories. Paris, as it would appear to me as a middle-aged tourist, would, I am afraid, be apt to blot out the infinitely more interesting Paris that we knew ten years ago.

‘When I look back at the whole five years over there, I find

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that the outstanding things are what happened in the first six months in the Legion and the last six months when I was looking up the missing fellows. The rest of it doesn't seem to figure as very much. When I think of the first six months, the picture is really a lot more clear, but things that I remember are apt to be the absurdities. For example, on our first trip up to the lines the thing I chiefly remember was how Trinkard dressed me down because my *gamelle* chain was rattling. I think at that particular moment we were something like five kilometres from the nearest German. I don't suppose it can be done, but if any one can convey to paper what a bunch of really innocent children we were, he will have accomplished quite a lot.'

Jack Moyet entered the service of the French Steamship Line after he was released from the Foreign Legion, and was first a library steward, then *maître d'hôtel* on the steamship Lafayette. It developed that he was not an American at all, but a French citizen from Brittany. His parents died when he was a baby, and he was brought up by an uncle, a priest. When the World War started, Moyet wanted to enlist at once, but because of his extreme youth his uncle refused to consent, and, to keep him from running away and joining the army, put him in a boys' school in England.

Moyet stayed at the school until 1916, then ran away and tried to get into the British Army. He was rejected, but some English officers stowed him away on a troop ship bound for Salonika, and carried him as far as Marseille. He went ashore there, and, claiming that he was an American citizen, volunteered in the Foreign Legion.

The name of Edmond Charles Clinton Genêt was cleared of the technical charge of desertion placed against it on the records of the United States Navy when the youth left in 1914 to fight for France. Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels wrote the boy's mother a letter which began:

After the War

My dear Mrs. Genêt:

There has but recently been brought to my attention a story full of interest to me, a story glorified by the unselfish patriotism and final sacrifice of an American lad.

The letter went on to say that, in fighting under the flag of France, Edmond Genêt was 'giving to his own country his valuable services in so serving France,' and concluded:

Edmond Charles Clinton Genêt, having honorably terminated an enlistment with an ally, since he died on the field of battle... the offense with which he is charged is nullified by his conduct, and conduct in the common cause under the flag of our ally. I myself am honored in having the privilege of deciding that the record of Edmond Clinton Genêt, ordinary seaman, United States Navy, shall be considered in every respect an honorable one.

There was formed in Paris, on July 4, 1919, an 'Association of American Volunteers in the Foreign Legion, 1914-1918,' which elected as its first president Edgar J. Bouligny, and whose objects are: 'to honor and perpetuate the memory of the American volunteer combatants who died fighting for France during the World War; to keep alive and strengthen the bonds of friendship and comradeship between the surviving American volunteer combatants, and to defend their interests at all times; to endeavor to promote a better understanding between France and the United States.'

The name of the organization was changed, on February 1, 1930, to 'Trench and Air Association of American Volunteer Combatants in the French Army, 1914-1918,' as it counted among its members Americans who had fought in the French Aviation, Line Infantry, and Artillery, as well as in the Foreign Legion.

'Trench and Air' held a ceremony at the Place des États-Unis, Paris, on February 27, 1930, in memory of Edward Mandell Stone, and a Paris newspaper, *L'Ami du Peuple*, in its account of the event, gave the address of the Association's head-

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quarters. It was seen by Prosper Didier, the old corporal of the 'American Squad' of the *Premier Étranger*, and the sole surviving member of that unit, who, after the September, 1915, battles in Champagne, served with the battalion of the Legion in the Dardanelles and in Macedonia. Didier, now retired from the Legion and living in Algiers, wrote to Paul Rockwell: 'It is always with emotion that I recall those who, aided by our veteran experience, came to prove by their contempt for death that the regiment of the Foreign Legion in France was an incomparable regiment. It is the greatest honor of my life to have had in my squad your compatriots, and I am proud of having had the esteem of such men.'

2

On July 4, 1923, there was dedicated in Paris, at the Place des États-Unis, a monument to the American volunteers who died for France. This testimonial of gratitude was largely due to the initiative and work of Commandant Maurice Mercadier, a French officer often in contact with the Americans during the war, who formed a Memorial Committee which raised the funds for the erection of the monument by popular subscription throughout France and the French Colonies.

The monument was the work of the master sculptor, Jean Boucher, himself a former combatant, and represents an American volunteer standing on a pedestal of Lorraine stone and calling his countrymen to arms. From the pedestal come forth, in high relief, a French soldier and an American volunteer, with their hands clasped in brotherly agreement, under the guardianship of a symbolical winged figure. On the sides are engraved poems by Alan Seeger, and at the back are the words of Edmond Genêt, '*Vive la France, toujours!*' and the names of the fallen American Legionnaires and aviators.

Ambassador Myron T. Herrick, the American speaker at the dedication ceremony, said:

After the War

‘When the momentous month of August, 1914, had run but half its course, when the enemy’s cannon was destroying, one after another, the supposedly impregnable fortresses of Belgium, when his armies were approaching day by day nearer and nearer to Paris, and his *avions* hovered above our roofs and dropped bombs on civilians — when the whole civilized world was watching breathlessly for the outcome of that monstrous onslaught upon its peace and well-being, our people in America, who at that time regarded the European war as of purely foreign concern, read in their morning newspapers, some with incredulity, others with wonder, that a handful of young Americans in Paris had abandoned their studies, their occupations, or their pleasures, as the case might be, and enlisted in the Foreign Legion of France.

‘I like to think of these fine lads and I like to talk of them as I saw them at my Embassy in those fateful August days of 1914. They came timidly, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups, to seek their Ambassador’s advice. Never was I so proud of the nation which bore me as when I looked into their eyes, for their acts were an inspired answer to the babble of pacifism, neutrality, and propaganda that “fatigued the air” of America.

‘You can imagine how difficult it was to tell them what I had in my heart to say. I wanted to embrace them in the name of their absent mothers and give them a father’s blessing. All I could find to transcribe my feelings, and yet keep within the limits of the duty imposed upon me, was to tell them that if I could change my place for theirs, or my age for their vigorous youth, my choice would be quickly made. This seemed to answer the predetermined question that I saw in their glowing eyes — there was no haste, no excitement, no foolish sentimentality, but sure determination and the courage of youth suddenly turned to manhood.

‘Subconsciously they were burning with patriotic zeal to go forth and fight under another flag, with the same colors as

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theirs, for what they instinctively felt was their own country's honor, and the influence exerted throughout America by their example was one of the imponderables which wrought for the final destruction of the invader. All honor to them — martyrs, poets, prophets, that they were!

General Mangin, President of the *Comité du Monument aux Volontaires Américains*, in his address, said in part:

‘Of all the monuments that fond remembrances have caused to spring up throughout the country, the one you have before you has been adjudged the best. It has been carved out of the hardest Lorraine stone, which time and exposure do not render harder still.

‘And it was our desire that it be erected in Paris, the head and heart of France.

Monsieur le Président du Conseil Municipal,

‘On behalf of the *Comité du Monument aux Volontaires Américains*, I entrust this fine piece of statuary to the City of Paris. Testifying as it does to the gratitude of France, it constitutes a fresh and lasting bond between the two countries. To the children of our schools, it will serve as a constant lesson of sacrifice to noble causes, and of everlasting friendship toward the American people. Should a passing cloud ever happen to arise between the two fraternal peoples that shed their blood together on the stricken field, in the holiest of quarrels, the pure radiance of this stone would soon dispel it. Should the cause of Civilization be threatened again, he would again come forward, the American Volunteer of 1914, and his arm of bronze would move to beckon his country on!

‘Oh! my comrades in arms, you lived long enough to show the world that gold and iron, its all too fondly worshipped idols, crumble to pieces when they come up against sentiments and ideas. No paltry calculation obscured the purity of your sacrifice. Ye sublime soldiers of idealism, who have passed away, we swear ever to remain worthy of you.’

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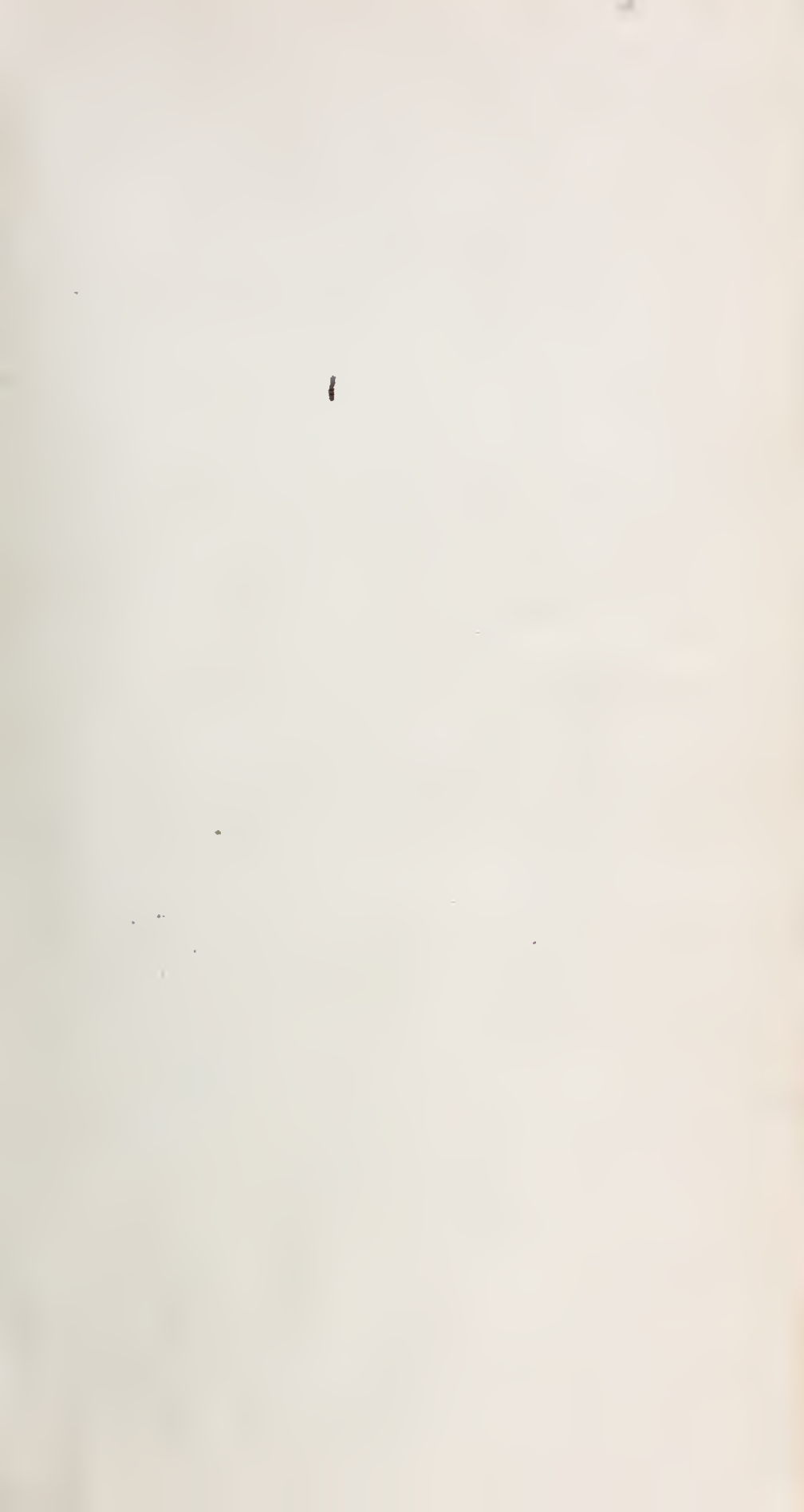
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